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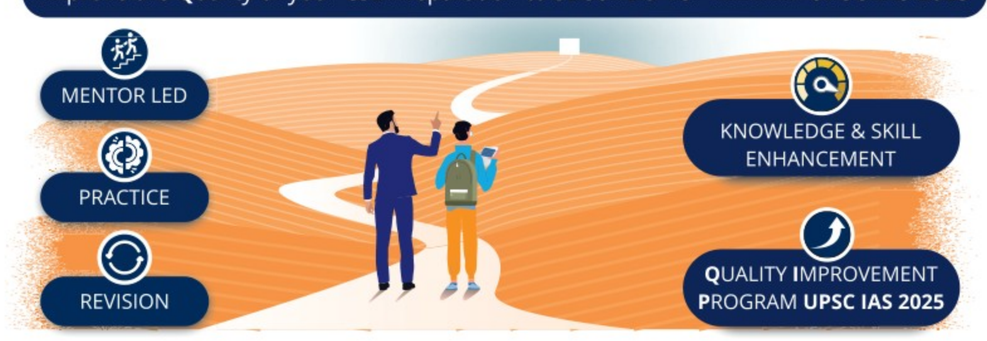

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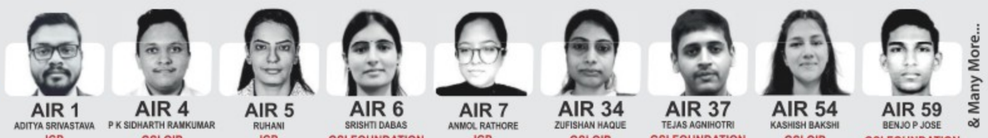

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HIGH-PROFILE TRIP

U.K. Foreign Secretary Lammy calls on Modi

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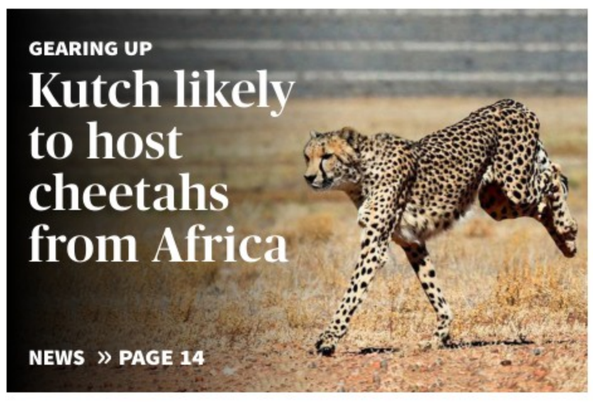

GEARING UP

Kutch likely to host cheetahs from Africa

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NETANYAHU IN U.S.

Israeli PM's planned speech sparks protest

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EXAM CONTROVERSY

NEET landed in a string of bad news this year

It needs safeguards against malpractice

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SWANSONG

Sharath looks to finish on a high in Paris

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NEARBY

Murder cases: Call for fast-track courts grows

BENGALURU
The clamour for setting up Special Fast Track Courts to try the Gauri Lankesh and M.M. Kalburgi murder cases has grown louder even as the accused have been granted bail on the grounds that there has been an inordinate delay in their trial. » PAGE 2

Opposition slams Budget as 'unfair'; govt. denies charge

In both Houses, Opposition says Centre has 'excluded' States ruled by non-NDA parties; terming the accusation outrageous, Finance Minister says Congress is giving people a wrong impression

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

In both Houses of Parliament, the Opposition on Wednesday attacked the government, accusing it of presenting a "discriminatory budget" that excluded the States ruled by parties that are not part of the National Democratic Alliance.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman issued a strong rebuttal to this in the Rajya Sabha, saying the Opposition was deliberately maligning the government and giving a wrong impression that some States had been left out.

The Upper House saw a sharp exchange of words between the two sides on Wednesday morning. The Opposition staged a walkout in protest.

Locking horns: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge speaking in the House on Wednesday. PTI

Congress president and Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge said that only two States had benefited from the Budget. He said it was a Budget aimed solely at safeguarding the BJP-led NDA government. "Opposition party-ruled States have been neglected. How will development happen if there is no balance? I condemn this and all the parties condemn this type of attitude," he said.

Ms. Sitharaman reacted strongly to the accusation, saying that all the States could not be named in the Budget, and the Congress, which had been in power for long, should know better than to make such an allegation. The finer details about scheme-wise allocations were available for all to see in the Budget documents, she said.

"The Cabinet, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, decided to set up a port at Vadhavan, but Maharashtra's name was not included in the Budget [speech]. Does this mean that Maharashtra should feel ignored?" she said, adding that ₹76,000 crore had been allocated for the project.

"This is a deliberate attempt of the Opposition parties led by the Congress to give the people the wrong impression that their States were not allocated funds or schemes," she said.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 12

'USED AS AN INSURANCE'
» PAGE 13

UPSC set to revamp exams by adopting latest technologies

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) is all set to revamp its examination system through technological solutions such as Aadhaar-based fingerprint authentication and facial recognition systems and CCTV surveillance using artificial intelligence.

The decision comes amid allegations of cheating in the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) for undergraduate medical admissions conducted by the NTA.

The UPSC floated a tender on June 20 seeking bids from public sector undertakings to revamp the examination process.

The move also coincided with the controversy over trainee IAS officer Puja Khedkar, who allegedly forged documents to appear for the Civil Services Examination on 12 occasions, far above the number of permitted attempts.

Students protesting against alleged irregularities in NEET. PTI

"The Commission intends to make use of the latest digital technology to match and cross-check the biometric details of the candidates and to monitor various activities of the candidates during the examination to prevent cheating, fraud, unfair means and impersonation," the tender document read.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 12

BJP leaders hold all-night dharna

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The BJP members on Wednesday started an all-night dharna in the State Legislature over a discussion not being allowed in the ongoing Monsoon session on the alleged fraudulent allotment of sites to land-losers by MUDA, including to the wife of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

"When we brought an adjournment motion on the loot in MUDA, the government was scared. They passed key Bills, including the finance Bill without discussion," said Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashok.

The BJP members were seen singing songs on the alleged scam, walking in the corridors of the legislature, and later had dinner and spent the night there.

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 6

CM MEETS GOVERNOR
» PAGE 9

Women of steel

Women bike riders during the All Women Motorbike Rally from Leh to Kargil to showcase the bravery and determination of women in the Indian Armed Forces. The riders paid homage at war memorials across Ladakh to mark the 25th Anniversary of the Kargil War. PTI

Krishnaraja Sagar filled to the brim

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

The Krishnaraja Sagar (KRS) across the Cauvery attained the full reservoir level (FRL) of 124.80 ft on Wednesday, in a development that will cheer farmers downstream.

The reservoir level was hovering at 124.10 ft at 8 a.m. and the storage was 48.475 tmcft as against the gross capacity of 49.45 tmcft. The rate of inflow was 41,099 cusecs and the outflow was 41,099 cusecs. The reservoir level on the same day last year was 95 ft and the storage was 19.14 tmcft.

Flood warning

Sources in the Cauvery Neeravari Nigam Ltd. (CNNL) said a flood warning had been issued to people living downstream of the reservoir to move to safer locations.

The gross capacity of KRS is 49.45 tmcft. M.A. SRIRAM

The CNNL said the surplus water from the reservoir, varying from 30,000 cusecs to 50,000 cusecs, would be released "at any time" and this could be further stepped up. Hence, people in the downstream and those living on riverbanks had been advised to shift to safer places and take all precautionary measures for safety and security of their lives and property.

The Kabini reservoir in H.D. Kote taluk is also full and the level was 2,282.35 ft as against the FRL of 2,284 ft. The gross storage capacity of the dam is 19.52 tmcft as against which the available storage is 18.45 tmcft. The rate of inflow into the reservoir was 18,147 cusecs and the outflow was 25,000 cusecs.

Cumulative outflow

The cumulative outflow from both KRS and Kabini is around 55,000 cusecs and the quantum of water released since June 1 from both the reservoirs is 50.34 tmcft, according to Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre.

RELATED REPORTS ON
» PAGE 3

Weaving through his troubles

Shahrukh, who significantly improved his batting against spin in IPL 2024, hopes to break into the national team soon; the Tamil Nadu batter has started this year's edition of the TNPL in strong fashion scoring three fifties and guiding his team to the playoffs with five wins in six games

S. Dipak Ragav

Over the last four years, M. Shahrukh Khan has been one of the most sought-after names in the IPL, securing megabuck deals despite being an uncapped player. The 29-year-old is known for his big-hitting capabilities down the order which teams value immensely. With the mega auction not far away, this year could be pivotal for the Tamil Nadu player as it could set the tone for the next three years of his career.

After a sub-par domestic season for TN in the white-ball tournaments last year, Shahrukh found a new home at Gujarat Titans in the IPL this year. He scored 127 runs at a healthy strike rate of 169.33, including a maiden IPL half-century, and the all-rounder feels the stint at the Titans has helped him evolve into a better batter.

Cast in the role of a finisher for Punjab Kings (2021-2023) and Gujarat Titans this year, Shahrukh's IPL numbers might not put him in the spotlight, considering he walks in as the innings approaches its climax and is expected to tee off from the get-go.

But looking under the hood, there is a case to be made that the swashbuckling batter has given a reasonable account of himself in the last two years of India's premier cricketing context, striking at a brisk pace. At the same time, there have been some shortcomings, indicating Shahrukh has yet to maximise his potential.

While he has shown great ability to clear the ropes effortlessly, especially against pacers in the death overs, he has found it hard to replicate the same against the spinners. But this year, he believed he has addressed it better and become a more complete batter.

"During the camp before the tournament, I worked hard on my game against spinners. Vikram Solanki and Mithun Manhas helped me improve, and it has opened up more scoring opportunities for me," said Shahrukh in a chat with *The Hindu*

According to him, a minor technical change has enormously impacted his game. "Vikram sir asked me to have a forward press when batting against the spinners. It has helped me play off the front and back foot, opening up the possibility of playing the cut and pull shots.

"Previously, I had a stable base and relied on timing and power. It was the best way to play the quicker bowlers in the back end of an innings. But against the spinners, I had only one shot, and the bowlers looked to take pace off their deliveries to me.

"This change helped me be ready earlier for the ball. At times, when you are playing against the spinners, you can react a bit late by staying too still."

He further explained that the forward press helped him get under the ball's trajectory. "Since I am tall, I used to stand upright. As a result, I was over the trajectory of the ball, and missed its flight. Now, with the forward press, I can get under the ball, and step out when it's flighted," he added.

Shahrukh says these small changes have given him the confidence to play higher up the order, and he even batted number four for the Titans in a few matches. The numbers reflect his contention of being an improved player against spin.

On the ascent: Shahrukh has done well to identify his weaknesses and work quickly to strengthen those aspects of his game. E. LAKSHMI NARAYANAN

While his overall strike rate against pace in his IPL career is 161.11, it drops precipitously to 112 against spin. But this year, his strike against pace and spin has almost converged to similar levels of 169.76 and 168.75, respectively, showing the fruit of his efforts. His boundary percentage, too, has improved, scoring one per every four balls.

As he prepares for the new season, Shahrukh has started well in the TNPL, scoring three half-centuries in six games and guiding his team, Lyca Kovai Kings, into the playoffs yet again with five wins in six games.

"I am feeling good. I have been batting well and coming up higher in the order this year because I am confident against spin. It will also help the team," says Shahrukh as he looks to lead his side to a hat-trick of titles.

He has also picked up from where he left last year in another aspect of his game. In 2023, the all-rounder topped the wicket charts in the competition and has continued to impress with his tidy off-spin bowling this year, taking 11 scalps so far, placing him second on the leaderboard.

"I have always enjoyed bowling and done a lot right through age categories. We have an excellent spin attack in TN, so I don't get to bowl a lot. But whenever I get a chance, I have given breakthroughs. Now, I can take wickets and contain runs, which will be an advantage for me in the IPL."

In 2022, Shahrukh got to the fringes of the national team when he was called up as a back-up during a home series against West Indies, and he now feels confident that he is a more well-rounded cricketer ready to take the next step. "I think I had a good IPL and made an impact in whatever chances I got. The numbers I have must also be seen in the context of where I bat, and (Ashish) Nehra was happy with what I have done. I am 100 % certain I can get back in the reckoning in the next three years."

THE GIST

- After a sub-par domestic season for TN in the white-ball tournaments last year, Shahrukh found a new home at Gujarat Titans in the IPL this year
- While his overall strike rate against pace in his IPL career is 161.11, it drops precipitously to 112 against spin. However, Shahrukh's strike against pace and spin has almost converged to similar levels of 169.76 and 168.75 in 2024
- In 2022, Shahrukh got to the fringes of the national team when he was called up as a back-up during a home series against West Indies, and he now feels confident that he is a more well-rounded cricketer ready to take the next step

Bodhana Sivanandan — a Kohinoor in the making

P.K. Ajith Kumar

Seeded 16th, England is not expected to shake the women's event at the Chess Olympiad in Budapest in September. But the progress of one player from the English team will be followed with keen interest. Bodhana Sivanandan is just nine and is already seen as one for the future.

The very fact that she has made it to the country's senior team has already caught the attention of England sport. She is set to be possibly England's youngest to represent the senior England team in any sports event.

You would actually see players of her age competing in age group tournaments, such as Under-10 (her category at the moment).

Impressive showing

Since chess is one sport where age or gender is no bar, she has already competed in open category events and has done well, too. Last year, at the European blitz championship in Croatia, Bodhana was the best ranked female participant, scoring a creditable 8.5 points out of 13. This was despite the fact that she had to forfeit her first round as she arrived late, but she recovered from that setback, amassing four wins from her next five rounds.

Bodhana had started out as the 328th seed in a field of 559 players, 49 of whom were Grandmasters, and went on to finish 73rd overall. In the last round, she held the Romanian Grandmaster Vladislav Nevednichy to a draw. His Elo rating - which determines the strength of a chess player - at the time was 2389, while that of Bodhana was 1944.

Queen's gambit: Bodhana, at the tender age of nine, hopes to become the youngest Grandmaster in history. NUMBER 10 (UK PRIME MINISTER)

If that is the way she performs against older, experienced players, one could imagine how she would do in an event against her contemporaries.

At the World Under-8 championships, held in Egypt and Georgia, she won the girls' titles in classical, rapid, and blitz formats. She did that by winning all her 11 games in the three tournaments. That is what you may call Bradmanesque, or in chess terms, Fischeresque. It is never easy to win every game in a chess tournament, for half your total games will have the slight disadvantage of playing with black pieces.

There is no shortage of prodigies in chess - you will find a lot of them here in India alone - but very rarely will you come across such dominant shows in a global event. Not surprisingly, the buzz about Bodhana in England is tremendous.

Local hero

She has given a high-profile simultaneous chess display at England's iconic Trafalgar Square and had a meeting with the former Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak. Like the Prime Minister at the time, Bodhana is of Indian origin. Her parents are from Tamil Nadu.

It was an old chessboard that Bodhana came across at her London home that kicked off her interest in chess, during the pandemic.

The Covid-induced lockdown had witnessed an unparalleled growth in chess: it is easy to play online and the popular Netflix series *The Queen's Gambit* also helped the game enter the mainstream.

Bodhana, who is ranked No. 58 in the world among junior girls (under-20) with 2185 Elo points, has already set some lofty goals. She wants to be the world's youngest Grandmaster. That record belongs to another Indian-origin youngster living abroad - Abhimanyu Mishra, who represents the United States. He became a Grandmaster at the age of 12, so Bodhana has another three years.

High praise from the greats

Veteran Indian Grandmaster Pravin Thipsay says it will be nice if she does it, but it shouldn't matter much if she cannot. "I hope she will be nurtured properly, she seems a special talent," he tells *The Hindu* over phone.

"The way she claimed her three World titles, winning all her games, is extraordinary. Since she is living in Europe, I think the parental pressure will be less on her, which is not the case in India. So she will be able to play without bothering too much about the results."

Thipsay believes the Olympiad will be a wonderful opportunity for her.

"England may be fielding her on the reserve board this time and I think she will get some games," he says. "She will be a better player for the experience and within a few years, she could well be playing on the top board for England."

PTI

Lone survivor: Captain Manish Ratna Shakya, pilot of Saurya Airlines, being rescued from the wreckage of the aircraft.

AFP

Thorough check: An official examines debris of the flight that crashed in Kathmandu.

18 killed in Nepal plane crash, pilot survives

Accident happened when a Saurya Airlines aircraft with 19 passengers, including a Yemeni national, crashed after take-off from Kathmandu's Tribhuvan airport

Sanjeev Satgainya
KATHMANDU

As many as 18 passengers, a Yemeni national and a child among them, were killed on Wednesday after an aircraft crashed shortly after taking off from the Tribhuvan International Airport in Nepal's capital Kathmandu.

There were 19 persons aboard the Saurya Airlines 9N-AME plane, a non-scheduled flight headed to Pokhara, a tourist destination which is a 25-minute flight from Kathmandu.

"One injured person was rescued and taken to the hospital, and 18 persons were found dead," the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN) said.

Pilot Captain Manish Ratna Shakya, who is the lone survivor in the crash, is undergoing treatment at the Kathmandu Model Hospital.

Hospital officials said Captain Shakya remains in a critical condition.

According to airline officials, the aircraft was heading to Pokhara for a C Check, a comprehensive inspection carried out every 18 to 24 months. All aboard the plane were Nepalese except one, who has been identified by CAAN as a Yemeni national.

After take-off, the plane turned in the wrong direction, Jagannath Niraula, chief of Tribhuvan International Airport, said. "As soon as it took off, it turned right instead of turning left," Mr. Niraula was quoted as saying by the *BBC News Nepali*. However, "the cause of the accident has not been revealed yet."

Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli and Home Minister Ramesh Lekh separately visited the accident site to gather details about the incident and provide necessary directives.

Mr. Oli said he was deeply saddened by the tragic deaths in the crash and was at the site to inquire about the cause of the crash with the Civil Aviation Authority's officials. He urged all for patience at this hour of grief.

According to Flightradar24 flight tracking, the plane was built in 2003 and was handed over to Saurya in 2017.

"The aircraft was not equipped with a modern ADS-B transponder, so it was not tracked on Flightradar 24," the flight tracker wrote on X, immediately after the crash.

An emergency Cabinet meeting on Wednesday decided to form a committee to investigate the crash. "A five-member committee has been set up under the leadership of Ratish Chandra Lal Suman, former director general of CAAN," said Communications Minister Prithvi Subba Gurung.

Airports in Nepal's mountain regions are notorious for their tricky runways and quickly changing weather conditions, posing challenges even for accomplished pilots. Wednesday's crash was the 105th in Nepal since the country recorded its first air disaster in August 1955, and the worst aviation accident in the country in 18 months.

(With inputs from PTI)

Blown to smithereens: Rescue and security personnel at the crash site near Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu on Wednesday. AFP

Nepal's treacherous skies

Airports in Nepal's mountain regions are notorious for their tricky runways and quickly changing weather conditions. By **Jasmin Nihalani** and **Vignesh Radhakrishnan**

1: RANK AMONG CRASHES

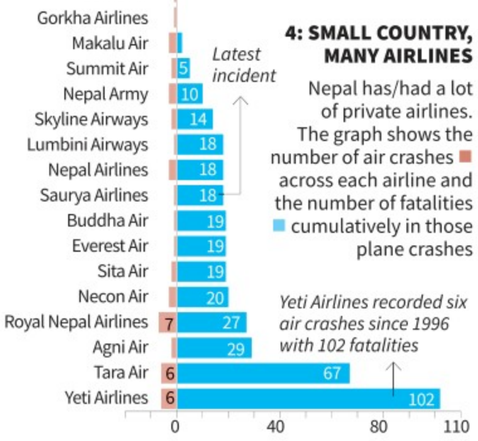
Since 1996, 54 flights have crashed in Nepal, ranking 33 out of 207 nations ordered based on the number of plane crashes

2: RANK AMONG FATALITIES

Including Wednesday's incident, 741 lives have been lost over Nepal in plane crashes, ranking 11 out of 207 nations

POOR INVESTIGATIONS

In the ICAO's latest Audit, Nepal scored only 21.6% on the accident investigation parameter, which is much lower than the global average of 54.5%



4: SMALL COUNTRY, MANY AIRLINES

Nepal has/had a lot of private airlines. The graph shows the number of air crashes across each airline and the number of fatalities cumulatively in those plane crashes

Yeti Airlines recorded six air crashes since 1996 with 102 fatalities

3: LOW AIR TRAFFIC, MORE FATALITIES

Nepal belongs to a set of countries where air traffic is relatively low (ranked 78th in departures) but fatalities are relatively high (11th in fatalities). Other countries in this lot include Nigeria, Pakistan, Angola and Sri Lanka.

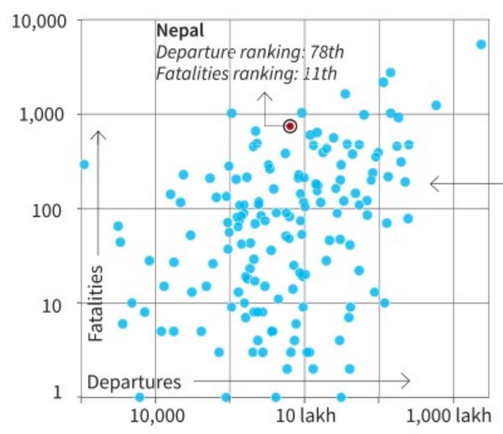


Chart depicts fatalities in crashes against departures by air carriers registered in a country since 1996. The farther to the right a dot (representing a country), the more the departures. Fatalities in crashes are plotted in the vertical axis of the chart. The higher a dot on the chart, the more the fatalities. In 68 countries, the number of departures was higher than in Nepal, but the number of fatalities was lower

19

Number of persons on board the Saurya Airlines aircraft which crashed on Wednesday

105

Number of plane crashes recorded in Nepal since its first disaster in August 1955

INBRIEF

Krishi Santhe on Saturday

With a motto to create awareness about the activities and products of the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore, among the public, especially among the farmers, UAS-B will organise a Krishi Santhe on Saturday at its GKVK Campus in Bengaluru, from 6.30 a.m. to 4 p.m. The products/varieties developed by the UAS-B and promoted by self-help groups, such as seeds, horticulture, aromatic and medicinal plants, bio-pesticides, bio-fertilizers, agricultural implements, vermicompost, honey, value-added products of cocoon handmade scented soaps, bakery products, value-added products of millets, nutritional laddu, bakery products will be on display and sale. UAS-B in a release has urged members of the public and farmers to participate in the santhe.

Garden City University convocation today

The sixth annual convocation ceremony of Garden City University will be held on Thursday. Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot will be the chief guest. The programme will be held on the university's premises on Old Madras Road at 11.30 a.m.

Shiksha Saptah celebrations inaugurated

PM Shri Kendriya Vidyalaya, M.R. Railway Colony, Bengaluru, organised the inaugural event of the week-long Shiksha Saptah celebrations on July 22. According to a release from the Kendriya Vidyalaya, the festivities started with the launch of the Teaching-Learning Material (TLM) mela by Uma Sharma, Chairman Nominee, Vidyalaya Management Committee.

Dr. Rudal Dubey, Principal, emphasised the importance of the effective use of TLMs as a paradigm shift in the process of teaching-learning.

E-paper edition

The Hindu offers more coverage of Bengaluru in the e-paper edition. (epaper.thehindu.com)

In the issue dated July 25, we have an interview with Prof. Purushothama Bilimale, who recently took charge as the chairman of the Kannada Development Authority (KDA). Bilimale spoke about his plans as the new KDA chairman which include developing century-old government schools into model schools and protecting minor languages within Karnataka.

Gauri, Kalburgi cases: Call for fast-track courts grows

The CM, in December 2023, had ordered officials to take measures to set up special courts

K.V. Aditya Bharadwaj
BENGALURU

The clamour for setting up Special Fast Track Courts to try the Gauri Lankesh and M.M. Kalburgi murder cases has grown louder even as the accused in both cases have been granted bail by the High Court of Karnataka on the grounds that there has been an inordinate delay in their trial.

Four accused in the murder of editor-activist Gauri Lankesh – Mohan Nayak, Amit Degvekar, K.T. Naveen Kumar, and H.L. Suresh – have been granted bail.

In the murder of scholar M. M. Kalburgi, two accused – Amit Baddi and Vasudev Suryavanshi, both also accused in the Gauri Lankesh case – have been granted bail.

While Nayak was granted bail in December 2023, five others were granted bail this month.

The Benches of the High Court of Karnataka in Kalaburagi and Hubballi-Dharwad, which have granted the bail, have cited delayed trial as a reason. Granting bail to three accused in the Gauri Lankesh case, judge S. Viswajith Shetty said, "There is undue delay in the trial and the material on record would go to show that the trial may not be completed in the near soon".

Gauri Lankesh

He also noted that "though the special public prosecutor has made a submission that a special court is being constituted to try the case, to date, the State has issued no such notification".

Families of Gauri and Kalburgi and activists who have been demanding a speedy trial for years now are upset that despite Chief Minister Siddaramaiah directing officials to take measures to set up Special Fast Track Courts for speedy trials in the cases in December 2023, the courts haven't been set up yet.

"I have challenged bail to Mohan Nayak, who was the first one to get bail in the Supreme Court, and I have been running around for the case in Delhi. Meanwhile, this month three others have been granted bail on the same ground of delayed trial. It is inexplicable and disappointing as to how the special fast track court has not been formed yet when the Chief Minister directed officials to take measures to constitute one as far back as December 2023. Red tape should not kill the case. A fast-track trial will give justice to both the victim and the accused," said Kavitha Lankesh, Gauri's sister.

Kalburgi's son Srivijaya also said the family was upset over the bail granted to the accused and would appeal to the state government to set up a special court for fast track trial in the case.

A total of 18 individuals have been named accused in the Gauri Lankesh case, of whom 17 were arrested in 2018. The trial in the case began in May 2022 at the Principal City Civil and Sessions Court, the designated court for cases registered under KCOCA 2000, invoked in the case. Of the 530 witnesses, nearly 150 witnesses have been examined so far.

A total of six individuals have been listed as accused and arrested in the Kalburgi case, whose trial also began in 2022 at the IV Additional District and Sessions Court, Dharwad. Of the 138 witnesses, only 11 witnesses have deposed till date. Though arrests were made in the cases and chargesheets filed in 2018, trials in these cases began only in 2022 due to the pandemic. Most of the accused in these cases have spent nearly six years as undertrials.

4 employees at Bal Bhavan in Cubbon Park use QR code to pocket ₹3.5 lakh

The children's play area at Jawahar Bal Bhavan in Cubbon Park.

Jahnavi T. R.
BENGALURU

They allegedly used to direct payments to their accounts instead of the KSTDC account

Next time you visit a tourist destination and are making a payment through a QR code, ensure that the receiver is the department concerned.

Karnataka Tourism State Development Corporation (KSTDC) recently learnt that four staff members at Bal Bhavan in Cubbon Park pocketed money meant for its account.

Between December 2022 and April 2024, a total of ₹3,50,964, which was supposed to go to the account of KSTDC, was diverted to the personal accounts of Abdul Wajid, Venkatesh K., Ramachandra K., and K. Kodandaramu. Bal Bhavan is a children's park in Cubbon Park. KSTDC maintains it. The four staff members were working at the Mayura Bal Bhavan kiosk. They allegedly used the QR codes to direct payments to their accounts instead of the official KSTDC account.

According to sources, Wajid, who was working on a contract basis as a driver, allegedly diverted ₹2,66,215 to his account between December 2022 and April 2024.

Another contract worker, Ramachandra, a second division clerk, allegedly diverted ₹31,917 to his account.

Venkatesh and Kodandaramu, who were both permanent employees of KSTDC, allegedly diverted ₹48,642 and ₹3,920, respectively, to their accounts.

Answering a question in the Assembly on July 23, Tourism Minister H. K. Patil said, "While the two permanent employees have been suspended and face a departmental inquiry, the contracts of the other two workers have been terminated. I have also directed that an FIR be registered against the accused." In the last few years, many employees of various wings of the Tourism Department have complained about the absence of full-time directors and managing directors for the department and the KSTDC.

"KSTDC is a client-based corporation, which requires generating its resources. But for over two years, the corporation did not have a full-time managing director, which is bound to lead to such incidents. The department should now ensure that such aberrations are not occurring in other tourist destinations," remarked a former senior official of KSTDC.

263 start-ups offered ₹60 cr. funding in 2022 and 2023

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The start-ups are in innovative technologies across various emerging sectors, including clean-tech and smart city solutions.

As many as 263 start-ups were offered funding of over ₹60 crore by the Department of Information Technology and Biotechnology of Karnataka in 2022 and 2023, according to a report released here on Wednesday.

The study titled "Bengaluru Innovation Report 2024", released by the Department of Electronics, IT, BT, and S&T, said that 24% of these ventures were women-led and 35% were beyond Bengaluru.

According to the report, among the 263 winners, women entrepreneurs lead 47 start-ups, and 119 start-ups are from tier II and III cities in the State, highlighting the State's commitment to inclusivity and diversity. These start-up winners are in innovative technologies across various emerging sectors, including clean-tech and smart city solutions, cutting-edge IT/ITES, healthcare and med-tech, biotechnology, and disruptive agricultural technologies.

Speaking at a felicitation ceremony for the winners of ELEVATE, a flagship grant-in-aid programme of the Department, Priyank Kharge, Minister for Electronics, IT, BT, and Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, said Bengaluru stands at the forefront of India's start-up revolution, home to 45 of the country's 112 unicorns.

As a dynamic innovation hub, the city fosters groundbreaking advancements in fields like AI, biotech, and fintech, he said. Supported by premier IT companies, research institutes, and capital allocators, Bengaluru's start-up ecosystem thrives on collaboration and competition, driving economic growth and technological development, he added.

A one-time grant of up to ₹50 lakh is given to encourage innovators who may need early-stage funding to develop a prototype, market development, and scale-up. The initiative aims to provide a comprehensive entrepreneurship platform for startups along with providing access to mentors, networking opportunities, funds, idea validation, and incubation facilities, among others.

'Remove structures on drains'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike Chief Commissioner, Tushar Giri Nath, has instructed the officials to identify and clear encroachments of stormwater drains and lakes in coordination with the land records and revenue departments.

Addressing a meeting held on Wednesday at the BBMP office with officials from various departments regarding the removal of encroachments on stormwater drains and lakes, he stressed the importance of surveying and identifying the encroached areas using land surveyors.

The identified encroachments should be reported to the tahsildar, who will then submit them to the Special Deputy Commissioner for appropriate orders and subsequent phased clearance.

High Court dismisses PIL petition against Nandini milk price hike

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Observing that the commercial wisdom of the Karnataka Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation Limited (KMF) to increase prices could not be a matter of consideration by the courts, the High Court of Karnataka on Wednesday dismissed a PIL petition questioning the recent increase in Nandini milk price by ₹2 per sachet of half and one litre by adding 50 ml extra milk in each sachet.

Determination of prices of any product, including milk, and pricing policy in that regard cannot be a matter of consideration in a PIL petition as pricing is in the policy domain, and the scope for judicial review is limited in case of palpable wrong or against statutory prescription, the court said.

A Division Bench passed the order while dismissing the petition filed by Amrithalakshmi R, chartered accountant and resident of Bilekahalli in Bengaluru.

The Bench also said price is fixed by a host of considerations, which are commercial in nature, and the court would not substitute commercial wisdom exercised by the KMF as the decision to increase the price of milk is an expert decision depending on a variety of factors.

Earlier, it was argued on behalf of the petitioner that KMF's pricing policy is not transparent and is not rational. It was also contended that though the price of a range of Nandini milk varieties was increased, in reality, the people belonging to the economically weaker section, who use the lowest priced Nandini milk variety, are paying more for the milk.

Indo-Korean international conference inaugurated

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Minister Sang-Woo Lim, Deputy Chief of Mission, Korean embassy in Delhi, spoke about a "free, peaceful, and prosperous Indo-Pacific" as he acknowledged the ideological resonance between India's G20 slogan, "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" and that of the founding Korean monarchy, "ruling for the benefit of all humanity". He proclaimed the principles of "inclusiveness, trust and reciprocity".

He was speaking at the inauguration of the three-day Indo-Korean international conference on political dynamics, technological breakthroughs and social innovation hosted by Christ (Deemed to be University) on Wednesday. The conference featured a diverse panel of speakers from India, South Korea, Japan, Abu Dhabi and Egypt. Chang-Nyun Kim, Consul General of The Republic of Korea, Chennai, said this collaboration would help build an international network towards a sustainable future.

The symposium advocated bolstering collaboration between nations, particularly in the global South.

Speaking of the cooperation between India and Korea, Hyon Woo Seung, president of Seoul Women's University, Korea, said, "I'm confident that the human resources from both countries will continue to achieve even greater achievements."

Gurjit Singh, former ambassador to ASEAN, spoke on what he termed the "politics of globalisation", demanding a "just international order" where the Indian voice is heard.

Alliance College participates in Robotics Championship

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Alliance College of Engineering and Design participated in the International Robotics Championship, RoboRoarZ International 2K24, held at the Singapore University of Technology and Design on July 13 and 14. This event, co-organised by The James Dyson Foundation and Wefaa Robotics, brought together 52 teams from six countries, including China, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore.

The college team secured second place in the Smorphi Imaginary category and fourth place in the Smorphi Robotics category. The team comprised Sheshadri Keshavaiah, 4th year, Electrical and Electronics Engineering; Sudhir Ramanjaneyulu, 2nd year, EEE; Nanditha Devanga, Neelakanta, Computer Science Engineering and Teja Sreya Adinarayana, CSE.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-Auction Schedules on 29-07-2024, 31-07-2024, 01-08-2024 & 02-08-2024
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites Bidders to participate in E-Auctions for contracts as scheduled below.

Sl.	E-Auction Catalogue No.	Category/Sub-Category	Date & Time of E-Auctioning
1	MYS-DVG-PMBJK-2	PMBJK	29-07-2024 & 12:00 Hrs.
2	MYS-PARKING-NTW	Parking - Mixed	31-07-2024 & 12:00 Hrs.
3	MYS-CLOAK ROOM-24	Pay & UseToilets	01-08-2024 & 15:00 Hrs.
4	MYS-PARKING - RNR	Parking- Mixed	01-08-2024 & 12:00 Hrs.
5	MYS-PARKING - RRB	Parking- Mixed	02-08-2024 & 10:00 Hrs.
6	MYS-SLR-12578	Parcel - SLR	02-08-2024 & 11:00 Hrs.

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
PUB/298/AAF/PRB/SWR/2024-25 Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Mysuru
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-Procurement Tender Notice No. HE-09-2024-25
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following works:

Sl.	Name of work	Approx. Value
1	Provision of enhanced safety requirements of electrical substations including civil and electrical works over Hubballi station.	Rs. 77,00,224.80
2	Improvement to HT distribution and switch gears system over Hubballi division.	Rs. 1,05,82,504.16
3	Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract for Johnson make lifts - 04 Nos. at Rail Soudha and 01 No. at CRH Hubballi for a period of 05 years.	Rs. 35,50,810.44
4	Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contact for 02 Nos. Escalators at PF No. 2/3 and PF No. 4/5 of Hubballi Railway Station for 05 years.	Rs. 31,91,052.06

Last date for submission of bids: Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 16.08.2024
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/General Hubballi
PUB/285/AAMO/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following works:
E-Tender Notice No.: Y/E.29/2024-25/33 Dated: 16.07.2024

Item of work	Approx. Value
Ashokapuram: Provision of Platform shelter to full length on PF 4 & 5.	Rs. 33,44,708/-

Last date for submission of bids: Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 07.08.2024
E-Tender Notice No.: Y/E.29/2024-25/34 Dated: 17.07.2024

Item of work	Approx. Value
Kabaka Puttur (KBPR) - Subrahmanya Road (SBHR): Construction of Type II Staff Quarters at Farangipete (FRG) (08 units).	Rs. 16,23,564/-

Last date for submission of bids : Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 08.08.2024
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Keep visiting the website for any corrigendum till closing date
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/General/ Mysuru
PUB/288/AAMO/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

SALEM CITY MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
E-Tender Notice
2024-25 - O & M Deficit Grant Fund
Roc.No. E2/ 7716/2024 Date:18 .07.2024

1. Revamping the existing RAW Water intake well at Raw Water Pumping Station in Thottilpatti relating to Salem Corporation Dedicated Water Supply Scheme.at an estimate cost of **Rs.424.00 Lakhs** .(Including GST).
2. Revamping the existing Water Treatment Plant 155MLD in Thottilpatti relating to Salem Corporation Dedicated Water Supply Scheme. at an estimate cost of **Rs.160.00 Lakhs** .(Including GST).
3. Revamping the existing Clear Water Pump House in Thottilpatti relating to Salem Corporation Dedicated Water Supply Scheme. at an estimate cost of **Rs.460.00 Lakhs** . (Including GST).
4. Revamping the existing Booster at Booster Pumping Station in Komburankadu relating to Salem Corporation Dedicated Water Supply Scheme, at an estimate cost of **Rs.410.00 Lakhs** .(Including GST).
5. Bid document and other information available at **www.tntenders.gov.in** Tender document can be downloaded from the above website.
6. **Date, time and Venue for Tender Procedures.**
   Submission of bids - 25.07.2024 to 30.08.2024 upto 3.00 P.M.
   Opening of bids - 30.08.2024 at 3.30 P.M

DIPR/2593/TENDER/2024 **Commissioner, Salem Corporation**

PUBLIC NOTICE
Public are hereby informed that my client **Smt. Suma Srinivas,** W/o Late. Srinivas. T.M, Aged about 55 years, Residing at No.12, 1st Floor, 2nd Cross, Srinivasa Colony, Mission Road, Bengaluru-560027, hereby informs that, my client has lost the original Sale deeds in respect of below mentioned lands through his brother in-law Mr. T.M. Narasimhan, as after demise of my client husband, his brother T.M. Narasimhan had collected the same on 18-08-2021 from my client for the purpose to transfer of Varasu Khata/ Mutation/RTC. Thereafter said T.M. Narasimhan passed away on 01-02-2023 as bachelor. Thereafter, those originals are not traced out in his house or in office, those originals as follows:
a] Registered sale deed dated: 24-06-2005, Document No. 4547/2005-06, in respect of the land bearing Sy No. 38/1, measuring 1 Acre 0.26 Gunts and
b] Registered sale deed dated:23-06-2010, Document No.1048/2010-11, in respect of the land bearing Sy No.38/2, measuring 0 Acre 30 Guntas, both the lands are situated at Koothaganahalli Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, purchased by my husband Srinivas. T.M.
c] Registered sale deed dated:15-05-2006, Document No. 5409/2006-07, in respect of the land bearing Sy No.147/1, measuring 0 Acre 36 Guntas and
d] Registered sale deed dated:16-03-2006, Document No. 6881/2006-07, in respect of the land bearing Sy No.147/1, measuring 1 Acre 16 Guntas, both the lands are situated at Mugalur Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, purchased by my husband Srinivas. T.M. Those lands were purchased by my husband Srinivas. T.M later he passed away on 13-05-2020 leaving behind me and my daughter Miss. Deepthi Srinivas as his legal heirs thus we acquired the same by way of inheritance, thus we become absolute owners.
Till now above said original sale deeds are not been found in anywhere. In this regard my client has lodged a police complaint on 14-07-2024 (e-lost complaint) and they have issued lost report vide No.1144829/2024 and 1144856/2024 respectively.
My client is therefore requesting the general public that if any person's find the aforesaid original sale deeds nor in the possession of the same then kindly return the same to my client or me. If anyone having any sort of claim over the said land may lodge their objections in writing ***within 10 days*** from this day to the undersigned.
Sd/-
G.R. CHANDRASHEKAR, ADVOCATE,
3, 'Sri Sai Sadana' 7th Cross, Kamakya Theater Road, BSK 3rd Stage, Bangalore-560 085. Mob: 9844102942
chandru.yashvin18@gmail.com
Bengaluru Date: 24-07-2024

Ketamine pill offers hope, and risks, for treatment-resistant depression

Reports have suggested tablets that release ketamine slowly can improve symptoms of depression. Based on these reports, a team led by Paul Glue at the University of Otago, in New Zealand, proposed that patients could dose themselves safely at home using slow-release ketamine tablets

Sneha Khedkar

A new tablet that slowly releases the drug ketamine can ease treatment-resistant depression, offering an alternative to cumbersome clinic-based treatments for people with the condition, researchers have found in a clinical trial.

Ketamine, sometimes called a "party drug", blocks the receptor for an excitatory neurotransmitter – those that cause neurons fire and send messages – called glutamate. It was originally used as an anaesthetic but researchers found that it had rapid antidepressant effects, acting within hours.

As such, health workers routinely prescribe ketamine to people with treatment-resistant depression, where antidepressants don't improve symptoms, and with suicidal ideation.

Ketamine is a drug of abuse, and unsupervised treatment in people with depression symptoms or suicidal ideation could be dangerous. Representative image.
BEN WHITE/UNSPLASH

Slipping past side-effects

It is most commonly administered intravenously (i.e. by injecting into the blood), and can also be delivered via an intranasal spray. However, in these routes ketamine can have many side effects, including headache, nausea, and drowsiness, and serious ones like increased blood pressure, loss of focus or dissociation from reality.

As a result, clinicians monitor patients who have been given ketamine for two hours while the side effects subside. This means an in-clinic treatment protocol that those suffering from depressive symptoms have said are inconvenient and render the drug more inaccessible.

Previous reports have suggested that tablets that release ketamine slowly can improve symptoms of depression with fewer side effects. Based on these reports, a team led by Paul Glue at the University of Otago, in New Zealand, proposed that patients could dose themselves safely at home using slow-release ketamine tablets.

"If ketamine is formulated as an extended-release tablet where it takes about 10 hours to release, most ketamine is broken down in the liver before it can get into the blood," Dr. Glue told *The Hindu* in an email. Ketamine's metabolites - the compounds formed when the liver breaks ketamine down - are the main drivers of its antidepressant effects, he explained. "However, the lower blood ketamine levels mean patients experience few or no side effects."

An enriched clinical trial

Dr. Glue's team developed an extended-release ketamine pill called R-107. To test its effects, they administered it to 231 volunteers recruited from 20 psychiatric clinics in New Zealand, Australia, Singapore, and Taiwan. All the participants had a major depressive disorder and whose symptoms hadn't shown any improvement despite being treated with at least two antidepressants.

In the first stage of the study, the researchers treated all the participants with 120 mg of R-107 every day for five days. They assessed the participants' depression symptoms after eight days. Those whose symptoms had not improved left the study at this point, leaving 168 people to proceed to the second stage of the trial.

Many clinical trials use this sort of stepped intervention – called an enrichment phase – to exclude people who don't respond to acute treatment in the first stage. Only those who respond to the treatment proceed to the next stage, which is double-blind, meaning neither the participants nor the researchers know which participant has received the actual treatment and which a placebo.

According to Dr. Glue, "Normally, depression treatment studies have a high failure rate of about 50%," where there is no visible difference in responses between those treated with the drug and those treated with the placebo. "The risk of study failure drops to about 20% by using this two-stage design."

'Very satisfying to see the results'

The 168 people recruited to the double-blind stage received either placebo tablets or one of four R-107 doses – 30, 60, 120 or 180 mg – twice a week for three months. The participants reported experiencing minimal side effects, including headache, nausea, and anxiety. Very few reported symptoms of dissociation. While some people reported more dire side effects such as severe headache, chest pain, and suicidal ideations, the researchers were able to determine them to be unrelated to the treatment.

After the trial period, more participants treated with the tablets showed improved depression symptoms compared to those who had received placebo (as measured using a standard clinical scale to assess symptom severity). Those treated with 180 mg of ketamine reported the most signs of improvement. And compared to 43% of those who received the highest ketamine dose, 71% of those taking placebo relapsed and suffered from symptoms of depression.

These results didn't surprise Dr. Glue, since previous early clinical data had revealed rapid antidepressant response to ketamine. "However, antidepressant drug trials can be unpredictable, so it was very satisfying to see the results," he added.

> Researchers designed R-107 to be exceptionally hard and difficult to shatter, so people can't crush the tablet and snort it or dissolve it in water to inject it intravenously for recreational use

Rishabh Bajaj, a psychiatrist at Asha Hospital in Hyderabad, also said the results, described in the journal *Nature Medicine* on June 24, were to be expected: "I would be surprised if people did not respond to ketamine."

The cost question

Most participants in the double-blind stage consumed the pills at home, with brief visits to the clinic that they said did not inconvenience them. This was a sign that extended-release ketamine tablets with fewer or no side effects could ease access to treatment for the people who need it the most, Dr. Glue said.

"A ketamine-containing tablet is convenient, particularly for those in tier-three cities," said Dr. Bajaj, since they may not have access to clinics for ketamine treatment sessions. The drug costs only about ₹ 20 whereas intravenous treatment, which is more common, can cost anywhere between ₹ 750 and ₹ 2,500 per session, he said. Nasal sprays are usually inaccessible because they are even more expensive, ₹ 10,000 to ₹ 20,000, he said.

However, he added that licensing costs might push up the tablets' cost as well.

The major limitation of the study, per Dr. Bajaj, was the enrichment phase, which can skew the results because a significant number of people had been excluded after acute treatment. Dr. Glue expressed a similar concern: "Enrichment is fine to demonstrate that the tablets work," but further studies in more people for regulatory approval will need to have an 'unenriched' population as well.

Risk of abuse and overdose

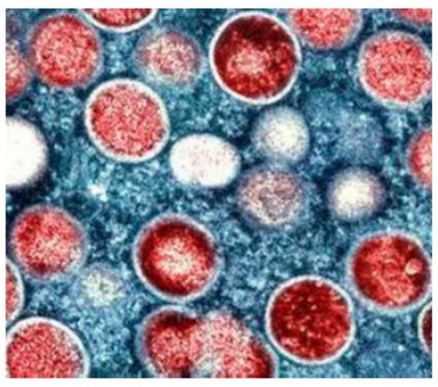
Another concern, according to Dr. Bajaj, is that ketamine is a drug of abuse, and unsupervised treatment in people with depression symptoms or suicidal ideation could be dangerous.

To address some of these concerns, Dr. Glue's team designed R-107 to be exceptionally hard and difficult to shatter, so people can't crush the tablet and snort it or dissolve it in water to inject it intravenously for recreational use. Fortunately, none of the trial participants reported craving the tablet either.

Dr. Bajaj agreed making the tablets shatter-proof could mitigate its abuse, but said there was still the possibility of users with severe symptoms overdosing themselves with multiple tablets. He suggested this risk could be reduced by rationing the number of tablets availed to users. But the downside of this idea is that patients would have to visit the clinic to refill their prescriptions, which was the point of devising R-107 in the first place.

Having more data about the treatment in more people can make the picture clearer, Dr. Bajaj concluded. "But that is going to take time."

(Sneha Khedkar is a biologist turned freelance science journalist.)



A colourised transmission electron micrograph of mpox particles (red) found within an infected cell (blue), cultured in the laboratory, captured, and colour-enhanced. NIAID/AP

Children at risk as mpox variant hits Congo camps for displaced

Reuters

Scars from the mpox pustules are still visible on 7-year-old Grace Kabuo's face, as well as on a handful of her playmates at a camp for displaced people near Goma, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Grace has otherwise recovered from the virus. Her mother, Denise Kahindo, says she is still unsure how her daughter was infected earlier this month.

"I just helplessly noticed the symptoms on her body," she said. For disease experts, Grace's case embodies a new concern about mpox, which was first identified over 50 years ago. Her infection was caused by a new variant that appears to be more capable of transmitting between people than previous strains.

Local doctors say they have seen 130 suspected mpox cases, almost entirely in children and adolescents, in the last four weeks at a nearby facility that treats displaced people from the camp.

"Fifty percent [of the 130 cases] are even less than five years old," said Pierre-Olivier Ngadjole, a medical advisor for Medair, a charity helping with treating and transporting patients from the camp near Goma to the nearby medical center in Munigi. An estimated 750,000 people have fled to the area due to fighting between the M23 rebel group and the Congolese government.

"You know the children; they play together... and in the displaced person camps, people are side-by-side," he added.

Mpox, a viral infection that can spread through close contact, is usually mild but can lead to death in some cases. It causes flu-like symptoms and pus-filled lesions on the body.

The current mpox outbreak in Congo has already seen around 27,000 cases and

Local doctors say they have seen 130 suspected mpox cases, almost entirely in children and adolescents, in the last four weeks at a facility that treats displaced people from the camps

claimed more than 1,100 lives, most of them children, since the beginning of 2023. It began with the spread of an endemic strain, known as Clade I. But the new variant, known as Clade Ib, appears to spread more easily through routine close contact, as seems to be the case among children.

Another mpox variant, Clade IIb, prompted an international health emergency when it spread globally in 2022, mainly through sexual contact among men who have sex with men. Public health officials in the U.S. and Europe launched campaigns to promote safe sex practices and vaccinated at-risk populations to curb the spread.

In Congo, there are no vaccines or specific treatments for mpox available outside of clinical trials. Stigma, regulatory hurdles, and a lack of money, along with measles and cholera outbreaks in the displacement camps have made it a challenge for people to access medical tools, especially in densely packed locations.

Last month, the country approved the use of two mpox vaccines, but funding remains a significant challenge. Only a few countries have offered to donate shots to Congo, and WHO approval regulations remain a hurdle for international vaccine organisations.

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

Famous women in space

Please send in your answers to science@thehindu.co.in

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1
X has the distinction of being both the first Arab woman and the first African woman to go to space. She flew to an altitude of 107 km as part of a mission flown by Blue Origin in 2022. Name X.

QUESTION 2
Y is a doctor and famous as the first woman from France to go to space, in 1996, when she conducted experiments on biology and physiology. She is also the first female astronaut to be given command of a Soyuz capsule during reentry. Name Y.

QUESTION 3
Z is a Chinese astronaut who ,in 2013, became the second woman from the country in space. She was also only one of two women in space on the 50th anniversary of the historic Vostok 6 mission. Name Z.

QUESTION 4
Aside from becoming the first person from Iran to go to space in 2006, _____ _____ is also the first female astronaut to fund her trip to the International Space Station. She also belongs to the _____ family, which sponsored a $10-million prize floated in 1996. Fill in the first two blanks.

QUESTION 5
Q is the only female astronaut currently in service at Roscosmos, the Russian space agency. In October 2022, she became the first Russian spacefarer to fly aboard SpaceX's Crew Dragon capsule to the International Space Station. Name Q.

Answers to July 23 quiz:
1. A ratio of any two such numbers can't express an irrational number – **Ans: Integers**
2. Relationship between line segments the ratio of whose lengths is irrational – **Ans: Incommensurable**
3. Founder of the Kerala school of mathematics – **Ans: Madhava**
4. Numbers whose square roots are irrational except if they're perfect squares – **Ans: Natural**
5. Number of irrational value discovered by Jacob Bernoulli – **Ans: Euler's constant**

Visual: **Omar Khayyam**
First contact: Seema Das | Anmol Agrawal | Navaneeth K.P. | K.N. Viswanathan | Shreya Arora

Visual: Name this woman. She remains the youngest woman to have flown to space (at 26) and the only woman astronaut who's undertaken a solo space mission.
KREMLIN.RU

For feedback and suggestions
for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

Search for missing truck, driver near Ankola put off owing to heavy rain

It has been confirmed by satellite imagery that a heavy metal object is under water around 30 m from the riverbank. Search operations to resume today

Girish Pattanashetti
SHIRUR (UTTARA KANNADA)

Inclement weather on Wednesday halted search operations to trace a missing truck and its driver at the landslip site near Shirur in Ankola taluk of Uttara Kannada being carried out jointly by the district administration and various government agencies. The search operations seemed to have reached the final stages.

Although experts in radar technology from a private agency reached the landslip site near Shirur by evening, heavy downpour spoilt the chances of a coordinated effort planned to be carried out with the help of helicopters from the Coast Guard and Navy personnel.

By that time, it was confirmed that a heavy metal body was under water around 30 m from the riverbank. As rain intensified, the experts held a discussion with all those involved in the operations and decided to put them off to Thursday morning.

Deputy Commissioner Lakshmi Priya, Superintendent of Police Narayan and Ankola MLA Satish Sail, who have been monitoring the operations from day one, told the media that the operations will resume on Thursday morning.

Experts on Wednesday established location coordinates of the missing truck in the Gangavali river near Shirur in Uttara Kannada. GIRISH PATTANASHETTI

They said that they as any radiation will affect the assessment of the location, those with mobile handsets will not be allowed near the site.

And, they themselves will hold media briefings on the progress of the rescue work.

Earlier in the day, they expressed the confidence of a positive outcome by evening, which, however, did not materialise because of rainfall.

NASA help

Earlier in the day, Mr. Narayan told *The Hindu* that with the help of his friend in NASA in the U.S., he was able to get the location coordinates which were subsequently sent to ISRO for further confirmation.

Through satellite images, they were able to confirm the presence of a heavy metal body under water.

Subsequently, the data was further put to scrutiny to ascertain the possible location of the buried truck.

"A deep penetrating radar from Noida is being brought to the site and on its arrival, a Coast Guard helicopter will take them over the river to pinpoint the exact location. Once that is done, Navy personnel will fix boundaries for the operations to be carried out and divers will go under water to search for the body of the driver which is likely to be stuck in the cabin of the truck," Mr. Narayan said.

Ms. Lakshmi Priya expressed the confidence about a positive outcome by the end of the day if the weather remained congenial.

MLAs at site

Mr. Satish Sail and Manjeshwar (Kerala) MLA A.K.M Ashraf, who have been camping in the area, are also confident of a positive outcome.

Mr. Ashraf expressed the satisfaction over the progress of the relief operations. Had it not been for the clamour over the GPS location of the truck being buried under the rubble, these operations would have probably begun three days earlier, he said.

Water levels in Almatti, TB dams increasing

A view of the Raja Lakhamagouda Reservoir on the Ghataprabha at Hidkal in Belagavi district where officials began releasing around 10,000 cusecs of water on Wednesday. P.K. BADIGER

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI/KALABURAGI/YADGIR

Water levels in the Krishna and its tributaries are increasing as heavy rain continues to lash parts of Maharashtra and surrounding areas, including Belagavi district.

Officials began releasing around two lakh cusecs (around 17.28 tmcft) of water from the Lal Bahadur Shastri Reservoir on the Krishna in Almatti of Bagalkot district on Wednesday. Belagavi Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Roshan said that water release from the Almatti dam has been raised to around 2 lakh cusecs, but the situation is under control.

Meanwhile, levels are rising in Tungabhadra Reservoir also with heavy rainfall lashing the catchment area, especially in the Sahyadri range. The water level in the reservoir near Hospete in Vijayanagara district has increased considerably in the last couple of weeks.

As per information provided by the authorities of the Irrigation Central Zone of Krishna Bhagya Jal Nigam Limited, the water level in the reservoir reached 1,631.28 ft (98.96 tmcft of water) at 4 p.m. on Wednesday against a full reservoir level of 1,633 ft (105.788 tmcft of water). The average inflow for the last 24 hours has been 84,115 cusecs.

Considering discharge from the Tunga and Varada dams upstream and the continuing rainfall in the catchment areas, the authorities raised 10 slipway gates by a foot to discharge 18,686 cusecs into the river course.

15 residents stranded

Meanwhile, as many as 15 residents and 115 head of livestock are stranded on three islands in Lingsugur taluk of Raichur district after a large quantity of water was released into the Krishna river course from Basava Sagar Reservoir in Yadgir district. The islands have been identified as Karakalagaddi, Mydaragaddi and Vankammanagaddi.

24-year-old woman stabbed to death in PG accommodation

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Kruthi Kumari

A 24-year-old private firm employee was stabbed to death at her paying guest accommodation in VGR Layout, Koramangala, on Wednesday. The deceased, Kruthi Kumari, was a native of Bihar and worked in a private firm in sales and marketing.

The assailant, according to the police, was known to her. The victim returned from work around 10 p.m. The attacker visited her room on the third floor around 11.10 p.m., stabbed her multiple times and slashed her neck before fleeing from the spot, said the police.

The others in the paying guest accommodation heard the commotion, but were too scared to come out and locked the door until the accused escaped after which they alerted the police.

The incident brought to light security lapses on the part of the PG accommodation management. Inquiries revealed that the assailant entered through the gate, which was kept open. There were no caretakers or security, a police officer said.

DCP (South East) Sara Fathima visited the spot and supervised the investigation. The police are examining CCTV footage to track the accused. The police have ascertained his identity, and a massive search has been launched to track him down.

The police are yet to question the other residents of the PG as they were in a state of shock. "We will summon the PG accommodation owner and the staff for questioning," the police added.

Convicted man tracked down

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Jeevan Bima Nagar traffic police on Wednesday tracked down a 38-year-old salesman of a medical shop who was convicted in a fatal accident case and had been on the run for the last six years.

The accused, Dinesh, a native of Tumakuru district, was tracked down by the police based on the court's direction. Dinesh had changed his location and was living under a different identity, the police said.

According to the police, Dinesh, while riding a motorcycle, allegedly knocked down a moped rider on Malleshpalya main road in 2012.

Timings
BENGALURU

THURSDAY, JUL. 25		
RISE	06:04	SET 18:48
RISE	22:10	SET 09:41
FRIDAY, JUL. 26		
RISE	06:04	SET 18:48
RISE	22:52	SET 10:36
SATURDAY, JUL. 27		
RISE	06:04	SET 18:48
RISE	23:35	SET 11:32

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	31	24
Mysuru	28	20
Bengaluru	25	20

Bengaluru Today
28°C Day will be comfortable with cloudy sky. Night will be pleasant. Spell of light rain and thundershower may occur.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
29°C Rise in temperature.The weather will be mostly dry. Day will be slight warm with cloudy sky. Night will be pleasant.

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THE HINDU
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Man opens fire killing nephew over property row

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Residents of Hampasandra in Chickballapur district woke up to gunshots and chaos and found that a villager had opened fire at his elder brother and nephew, killing one of them on the spot in the early hours of Wednesday.

The deceased has been identified as Nazeer Ahamad, 60, while his father, Mahaboob Sab, 90, a farmer, sustained severe injuries.

The accused, Bashir Ahamad, 65, according to police, is Nazeer's uncle and allegedly attacked him while he got out of the house and was heading for the morning prayers. Hearing the gunshot and commotion, Mahboob Sab rushed to his son's rescue and confronted Basheer, who tried to shoot him as well and later attacked him with a machete and then fled from the scene.

Under treatment

The Gudibande police shifted the injured to the hospital, where the doctors declared Nazeer Ahmed as brought dead, while Mahboob Sab was shifted to NIMHANS, where he is being treated.

Meanwhile, after attacking the duo, Basheer headed to Bagepalli allegedly with the intention to kill his wife and children, who were at her parental home. But by then, his wife Shahida had come to know of what had happened in Hampasandra over the phone and did not open the door. The Bagepalli police later arrested Basheer.

A probe revealed that Basheer Ahmed, who is the younger brother of Mahboob Sab, had a dispute over the ancestral property. He was working in Saudi Arabia and returned a few years ago to settle down in India.

Susheer was the youngest among them. "There was a property dispute in the family. Early on Wednesday, Basheer first fired at Nazeer with a country-made pistol and also attacked him with a machete, killing him on the spot. He then tried to fire at Mehboob Sab, who came out of the house, but as the pistol did not fire, he attacked him with the same machete. He then went to Bagepalli and tried to attack his wife, but the police caught him and recovered the weapons".

During questioning, Basheer allegedly told the police that he did not get his rightful share of their ancestral property, due to which he attacked his elder brother and nephew. He also said that he suspected his wife of infidelity and, hence, wanted to kill her and their children.

Basheer worked as a tailor in Saudi Arabia and returned two years ago. He had allegedly planned to carry out the killings a few years ago and had even gone to Bihar, where he bought a country-made pistol and did target practice.

The gun did not work, and he had to give up his plan. Recently, he had purchased another pistol with which he shot his nephew. The Gudibande police have registered a case of murder, attempt to murder and also under the arms act against Basheer and taken him into custody for further investigation.

2012 Bengaluru terror plot case: HC refuses to discharge Sabeel

FROM THE COURT

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka has refused to discharge Sabeel Ahmed alias Motu Doctor, who was allegedly working for the banned terror group Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), from the 2012 Bengaluru terror plot case.

Sabeel had sought discharge from the Bengaluru case on the ground that he was acquitted in the Delhi terror case, and hence, the trial against him cannot be continued in the Bengaluru case, in which the charges framed against him were identical to the Delhi case, in view of bar imposed in Section 300 (person once convicted or acquitted not to be tried for same offence) of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

However, a Division Bench comprising Justice Sreenivas Harish Kumar and Justice J.M. Khazi rejected his plea while observing that "the petitioner may have been acquitted by the Delhi court, but that acquittal does not stop the trial by the Bengaluru court. In fact the act giving rise to offences with which the petitioner was charged and tried by the Delhi court are not same as acts constituting offences for which he is being tried by the Bengaluru court."

While pointing out that the petitioner himself had claimed during the trial before the Delhi court that the case pending in Bengaluru was altogether different, the Bench said that "maybe the acts have similarity [in Delhi and Bengaluru cases], but they are not same. Some of the witnesses to both the trial may be the same; again, it is not grounds for invoking Section 300 of Cr.P.C."

The Bench also said the Special Court for National Investigation Agency (NIA) cases very well delineated the differences in allegations made in both the cases.

The charges

The NIA had pointed out that he was charged for allegedly raising funds and for conspiracy to a terrorist act under Sections 17, 18 and 20 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act for being a member of terrorist organisation in the Delhi case, and in the Bengaluru case, the charge is that he took part in the terrorist activities of plotting for targetted killings of important personalities of Hindu community, politicians, journalists and police officers in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

The petitioner, who was absconding for long, was arrested only in 2020, and he was later charged both in Bengaluru and Delhi cases. He was acquitted in the Delhi case in February 2023.

APPOINTMENT

BANGALORE TURF CLUB LTD.
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The last date for receiving applications is 16th August 2024.
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ISEC-24511

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Jump in intraday stock traders between FY2019 and FY2023

300 In per cent. The number of intraday traders in India's equity cash market jumped 300% between fiscal years 2019 and 2023 when seven out of 10 were making losses, SEBI said. REUTERS

The losses of BSNL narrow in the fiscal year of 2024

5,371 in ₹ crore. As a result of measures taken by the Centre, BSNL/MTNL have started earning operating profits from FY2020-21, Minister of State for Communications said. PTI

Amount saved in cybercrime cases via new reporting system

2,400 in ₹ crore. Over ₹2,400 crore was saved in more than 7.6 lakh cyber crime cases due to 'Citizen Financial Cyber Fraud Reporting and Management System'. PTI

The number of schools closed in Pakistan due to heat

1 in lakh. Temperatures in Pakistan peaked at more than 50°C in parts of rural Sindh. Despite contributing less than 1% to greenhouse gas emissions, Pakistan has experienced severe weather-related disasters recently. AFP

Amount for depositors of Sahara Group of Coop Societies so far

362 in ₹ crore. Cooperation Minister Amit Shah informed Parliament that the amount was disbursed to over 4.2 lakh depositors. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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On increase in electricity tariff in T.N.

Has tariff rise become a constant practice? Why are Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises protesting the rise in electricity tariffs in Tamil Nadu? Apart from tariff hikes, why was the Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation Limited in the limelight recently?

EXPLAINER

T. Ramakrishnan

The story so far:
On July 15, the Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission (TNERC) announced an average hike of 4.83% for domestic and all other consumers. The increase came into effect retrospectively from July 1. The Commission waited for the Lok Sabha and Vikravandi Assembly byelection results before announcing the tariff increase, even as it indicated, in its tariff order of September 2022, that the new tariff will come to effect from July 1 every year. Even though the previous increase of 2.18% was made effective from July 1, 2023 for various types of consumers, the State government absorbed the burden of the increase for most of the consumers, including in the domestic category, which accounts for around 2.3 crore consumers.

Why has the tariff been increased?
The genesis for the present revision can be traced back to the TNERC's tariff order of September 2022 when it was decided to adopt a multi-year tariff framework, beginning from FY2022-23 to 2026-27. The Commission had noted that considering the trend in Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) rates which were in the range of 4.9% to 6.3%, between 2018 and 2022, the CPI index seemed to be a convenient fit. At the time, the panel also decided that irrespective of the inflation rate, the actual annual increase would be capped at 6%. Besides, the State government's support to the Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation Limited or TANGEDCO (now called Tamil Nadu Power Distribution Corporation Limited or TNPDCL) has been on the rise for the last few years. For instance, the figures of tariff subsidy and grants, which were at ₹8,876.36 crore and ₹11,671.06 crore (totally ₹20,547.42 crore) during 2021-22, rose to ₹14,976.42 crore and ₹17,127.18 crore (₹32,103.6 crore) during 2023-24. An official said the increase would fetch an additional revenue of ₹2,720 crore and that the power utility was still expected to end the year with a loss of ₹12,280 crore assuming that there is no significant increase in demand during the year.

Feeling the heat: AIADMK cadres stages a demonstration condemning the government for the electricity tariff hike in Madurai on July 23. ASHOK. R

What has been the impact?
The State government asserts that about one crore domestic consumers have been spared of the increase. There is no change in the scheme for free consumption of 100 units bi-monthly for the domestic category or the free power supply scheme for huts and agriculture.

However, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), which are over 25 lakh in number (as per official registration) and provide employment to the local youth, have protested strongly against the increase, saying that it puts a heavy burden on them. According to the segment of open end spinning mills, the higher electricity charges mean ₹25,000 additional outgo a month. The mills would have to shell out ₹0.35 a unit as additional tariff and ₹35 per KvA (Kilo-volt Ampere) as additional maximum demand charges. The power charges went up by ₹75,000 a month last year. Such frequent increase in power cost is making the textile industry of Tamil Nadu "uncompetitive," G. Arulmozhi, a representative of the industry, complains.

Even though many political parties have condemned the tariff increase, the government has remained unfazed.

For what else was the State power utility in the news recently?
Early this month, the Directorate of Vigilance and Anti-Corruption (DVAC) registered a preliminary inquiry into allegations of serious irregularities in the tender conditions and import of coal by the erstwhile TANGEDCO which caused a huge loss to the State exchequer. This followed the government's nod. Arappor Iyakkam, a Chennai-based anti-corruption body, had alleged, in its complaints to the government at different points of time, that there was massive corruption in the import of coal involving TANGEDCO officials, Adani Global Pte Ltd. and others to the tune of ₹6,066 crore between 2012 and 2016. The allegation centred around both the cost and quality of power supplied.

Even though there has been no statement from the government on this score, the policy note of the State Energy Department for 2024-25 states that the Tamil Nadu Power Generation Corporation Limited (TNPGCL), an entity formed out of the former TANGEDCO only to handle production from fossil fuel, has their coal quality wing headed by a superintending engineer to monitor the quality of domestic and imported coal. The Quality Council of India and the Central Power Research Institute (CPRI) are being engaged to sample and analyse domestic coal at the mine end and imported coal at the discharge end.

In the middle of this month, there were reports in a section of the media that industrialist Gautam Adani visited Chennai and held meetings with people whose identities have not yet been revealed publicly. The Adani group was said to be keen on implementing the Parandur airport project and expanding the Kattupalli port.

THE GIST

- On July 15, the Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission (TNERC) announced an average hike of 4.83% for domestic and all other consumers.
- Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), which are over 25 lakh in number (as per official registration) and provide employment to the local youth, have protested strongly against the increase, saying that it puts a heavy burden on them.
- The State government asserts that about one crore domestic consumers have been spared of the increase.

Is immunity for the President and Governors absolute?

Does Article 361 grant absolution to the Governor even against criminal charges?

Krishnadas Rajagopal

The story so far:
A three-judge Bench headed by the Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud has impleaded the Union government and sought assistance from the Attorney General of India to decide if a "blanket" immunity granted under Article 361 to the President and Governors, while in office, from criminal proceedings undermines fairness, constitutional morality and violates fundamental rights to equal protection of the law and fair trial.

What is the case?
The question came up in a petition filed by a contractual woman employee with the Raj Bhavan who has accused West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose of sexual harassment and molestation.

The woman, identified as 'XXX' in Supreme Court records to protect her identity, said the "absolute immunity" given to the Governor is based on the victorian belief that the "King can do no wrong". She said the police have treated her complaint against the constitutional authority in a "cavalier manner" citing the immunity clause. She said the only option left to her is to wait for the Governor to demit office for the investigation to commence on her complaint of gender violence. She, however, fears that the delay in the criminal investigation against such a powerful person may eventually deny her justice during trial. She has urged the court to mandate the State of West Bengal through its police machinery to carry out an investigation. The employee has also asked the court to frame guidelines and qualify the extent of the immunity.

Do Governors have immunity?
Article 361 (1) provides that the President and Governors are not answerable to any court for acts done in exercise and performance of their powers and duties.

However the first proviso to Article 361(1) allows the conduct of the President to be reviewed by any court, tribunal or body designated by either House of Parliament for the investigation of a charge under Article 61 (impeachment for violation of the Constitution). The second proviso to Article 361(1) holds that the immunity cannot stop a person from suing the Centre or State concerned.

The clause in question before the Supreme Court in the current case is clause (2) of Article 361 which mandates that "no criminal proceedings whatsoever shall be instituted or continued against the President, or the Governor of a State, in any court during his term of office". The apex court has decided to interpret clause (2) of Article 361 to determine when exactly could criminal proceedings be instituted against a President or Governor. In short, the court has decided to rattle the protective cover of immunity to see if it is "unfettered or unbridled".

Interestingly, the Constituent Assembly debates on Article 361 (Draft Article 302) in September 1949 show that a Member had indeed found the language of clause (2) vague. The discussion concerned the phrase "during the term of his office" in Article 361(2). The Member had queried if this would mean the President or a Governor could enjoy immunity by continuing in office despite committing a criminal act. The question was left open.

What are the arguments raised?
The petitioner argues that a bar on criminal proceedings under Article 361(2) does not extend to illegal acts or those which "strike at the roots" of a citizen's fundamental rights. The alleged actions of Governor Bose infringed upon her right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution, she submitted. The immunity under Article 361 cannot impair the police's powers to investigate the offence or even name the perpetrator in the complaint/FIR. No part of the powers of the Governor provide for him to sexually abuse employees, the employee said.

The Supreme Court, in *Rameshwar Prasad vs. Union of India*, had interpreted that 'civil immunity' under Article 361(4) did not take away the power of citizens to challenge the actions of the President or Governors on the ground of 'malafides'. An analogy could be drawn to interpret criminal immunity the same way. The petition referred to a Madhya Pradesh High Court ruling in *Ram Naresh vs State of Madhya Pradesh*, which had held that the immunity would not impair the police's powers to investigate an offence, which included recording the Governor's statement.

THE GIST

- A three-judge Bench has impleaded the Union government to decide if a "blanket" immunity granted under Article 361 to the President and Governors, while in office, from criminal proceedings undermines fairness and constitutional morality.
- The question came up in a petition filed by a contractual woman employee with the Raj Bhavan who has accused West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose of sexual harassment and molestation.
- The petitioner argues that a bar on criminal proceedings under Article 361(2) does not extend to illegal acts or those which "strike at the roots" of a citizen's fundamental rights.

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No. HFW/KSMSCL/EQPT/FW/HEARING AID/TND/10/2024-25 Date: 24-07-2024

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Ref: 1) Tender Notification No: **HFW/KSMSCL/EQPT/FW/HEARING AID/TND/10/2024-25 (IND-0145)Date:24/07/2024.**

Nationwide Tender is invited through **e-Tendering system** under KTPP Act 1999 and Rules 2000 for the following tenders:

1. **Tender for Supply of Hearing AID Under Family welfare Programme (Cochlear implant Scheme) programme.**

The tenderers who have registered under e-Procurement department may participate through e-tendering system.

Details regarding EMD, Terms and Conditions and other information are available in the Tender Document, which can be downloaded from the website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in from 24-07-2024.** The eligible tenderers shall submit their e-tenders under e-procurement platform for above mentioned tender. Further information if any may be obtained from this office.

Sd/- Managing Director
KSMSCL, Bengaluru.

DIPR/CP/1080/2024-25

RAJASTHAN RAJYA VIDYUT PRASARAN NIGAM LIMITED

Notice Inviting Bid

Bids for Transportation with Loading, unloading & stacking(including weighing bills, toll taxes, Transit insurance) of Galvanized/non-Galvanized line/GSS material, equipment's from RVPN store at Jaipur /Beawar/Jodhpur to 220KV GSS Sakatpura, Kota in District-Kota and vice versa, Erection and Dismantle of 220KV and 132KV Circuit Breaker and Erection and Dismantle work for shifting of 132KV Bay of 220/132KV ,160MVA Tr-1 on 132KV Bay No-17 to 18 (Spare Bay) at 220 KV GSS Sakatpura, Kota , Lilo of deoli-sangod line are invited from interested bidders. Other Particulars of bid may be available on the Procurement Portal **(http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in)** of the state; and RVPN departmental website: **http://energy.rajasthan.gov.in/rvpnl**.

UBN :- VPN2425SSOB00941, VPN2425WSOB00942, VPN2425WSOB00943, VPN2425WSOB00967

Superintending Engineer (T & C), Kota

Raj.Samwad/C/24/717 RRVPN/TR-6271/2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Clients, intends to purchase the under-mentioned Schedule Property from its owners, Ramesha, Mohan S., Yamuna and Savithri, the childern and wife of Srinivasa, respectively and all R/at. No. 105/99, 1st B Cross, Pipeline R.P. C. Layout, Vijayanagar, Bangalore - 560 040.

Any person/s, financial Institution/s, predecessors-in-title or their legal heirs, having any claim, right, title or interest over the Schedule property or any part thereof in any manner or against the owners of the schedule property or objecting to the sale in favour of my client should contact the undersigned in writing **within 10 days** (Ten Days) of the issuance of this Public Notice with all documentary proof on which they are basing and asserting their rights, after which period my clients shall proceed further to complete the sale transaction and any claim or objection thereafter will not be binding over the schedule property.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that Agricultural land measuring an extent of 2 (two) Acre in Sy. No. 173/1 of Sindhuvallipura Village, Kasaba Hobli, Nanjangudu Taluk, Mysore District and bounded on the : East by :Land belonging to Rangashetty, West by : Road, North by : Land belonging to Chikka Ajjaiah, South by : Land allotted to Srinivasa.

Sd/- Sri Vinay Paul T.K., Advocate,
'U & V Legal', Chambers: No. 86, FF2, 'Gokul Towers',
Place: Bangalore M.S.R. Road, Gokula, Bangalore - 560 054.
Dated : 23.07.2024 Cell-09448058394, Email:vinaypaultk@gmail.com

AGRICULTURE PRODUCE MARKET COMMITTEE BIDAR

E-mail: apmcbidar@gmail.com, apmcbidar@reddiffmail.com

No.AMD/APMC/BDR/SG/304/ 2024-25 Date: 22-07-2024

-: CORRIGENDUM BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION:-

APMC Bidar hereby invites Tender for Security, Cleaning and other services in Main Market Yard and Halldkeri Fruits & Vegetables Sub-yard of APMC Bidar Notification No.APMC/B/SG/283/2024-25 Dated:11-07-2024 Through e-procurment portal Tender will be invited on the website. http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in But Due to some reason the upload is delayed due to technical error in e-procurment publication issued as follows: Date:11-07-2024 Postponement of date in publiciation will be done. 1) E-tender applications obtaining date: 15-07-2024 instead 22-07-2024 2) Last date for the submission of filled in date: 29-07-2024 at 5.00 PM instead 09-08-2024 at 05.00pm 3) Pre bid/Clarification meeting date: 25-07-2024 at 11.30 AM instead 31-07-2024 at 11:30 AM, 4) Date of opening of Technical bid 01-08-2024 at 4.00 PM instead date: 12-08-2024 at 11.00 AM, 5) Date of opening of Financial bid 01-08-2024 at 5.00 PM instead 12-08-2024 at 05.00 PM Place of Tender opening Office of the Secretary, Agricultural Produce Market Committee, Bidar. Elsewhere for further information and others terms & conditions office available at http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.

Sd/- Secretary
Agriculture Produce Market Committee Bidar

Sd/- Administrator
Agriculture Produce Market Committee Bidar

DIPR/Bidar/85/KSMC&A/2024-25

PUBLIC NOTICE

The general Public are hereby notified that my Client intends to purchase the Property more fully described in the Schedule from its present Owner namely **Sri. Santhosh Kumar. M.** S/o. Late Sri. Marappa. Any person having any claims or objections for the proposed Sale can send their objections with all supporting documents to the undersigned within a period of ***7 days*** from this day, failing which my client would proceed and conclude the proposed sale transaction.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY
(Description of the Residential Property-subject matter of conveyance)

All that Piece and Parcel of the Residential **Immovable Vacant Site bearing No. 40,** Gramatana Khatha No. 55, Carved out of the Land bearing Survey No. 21 of **Channenahalli Village, Tavarekere Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk Bangalore,** presently included under Channenahalli Gram Panchayat, earlier with Taverekere Gram, measuring **East to West 40 feet and North to South 35 feet admeasuring 1400 Square feet,** and bounded as follows:-

East by : Road, **West by :** Site No. 39,
North by : Site No. 41, **South by:** Road.

Sd/-
Sharanya P.A., Advocate,
#417, 12th Main Road, 75th Cross,
6th Block, Rajajinagar, Bangalore -560 010.
(M) : 8792232913

Government of Karnataka
Executive Engineer,
RDW&S, Division, Mysore

Short Term Tender Notification No:07/2024-25 Date: 22.07.2024

On behalf of the Governor of Karnataka Items rate tenders under KW1,KW2 ,KW-3& KW-4 Standard Bid documents (Two cover system) has been called for **03 O&M works of K R Nagar taluk& 02 works of mysuru taluk (Estimate cost Rs 29.27 Lakhs to Rs 667.00 Lakhs)**under the Head of Account: 2020-21 Jal Jevan Mission. Tender is been invited as per Karnataka transparency Act G.O.No.FD9 PCL 2004 Dt. 06.08.2005 and as per recent amendments, Date of uploading Tender forms under e-procurement Dt: **25.07.2024 05:00 PM** onwards, Last Date for submitting the filled Tender forms is **01.08.2024 upto 5:00PM**, Opening of Technical bid **02.08.2024, 5.30 PM** onwards, Opening of Financial bid after approval of Technical bid. Eligeble Agencies can participate in the tender process and for e-procurement support contact e-procurement Tel. Phone No 080 – 22485867, 080-22485927 . For more details log on to www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in or contact the Officer under signed at office hours. Phone No.0821-2460 495..Tender Form Fees – As per e-procurement.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, RDW&S, Division, Mysore

DIPR/DDMYS-312/KSMCA-217/2024-25

University of Agricultural Sciences

Estate Office, GKVK, Bengaluru-560 065.

No. EO/SPO/Kppp/5/2024-25 Date: 22-07-2024

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through Kpp Portal only)

The University of Agricultural Sciences, Bengaluru has invited Tender in the prescribed form as per the Standard tender document **KG-3** from the reputed firms for the procurement of the following Laptops to SC/ST Students under SCSP/TSP Grants. The details of the **KG-3,** Tender Notification, Schedule, Specifications are available in the website **kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** The cost of the Tender document is as per Kpp Portal NORMS. The EMD shall be paid using Kpp Portal payment modes.

Laptops Tender will be under two cover system and the conditions for two cover systems is also uploaded in the website.

The Blank Tender Documents can be down loaded from **kppp.karnataka.gov.in. The Pre-bid meeting will be held on 01-08-2024 at 11:30 a.m. Last date and time for uploading the tender on 05-08-2024 up to 4:00 p.m. The Technical bid will be opened on 07-08-2024 at 10:30 a.m. The Demo for Laptop on 09-08-2024 at 11:30 a.m. The Financial bid will be opened on 12-08-2024 at 10:30 a.m.** in the Tender Committee room of Estate Office. Further details can be had from the office of the undersigned during working hours and also refer UAS Website: **www.uasbangalore.edu.in.** and e-portal Help **Desk-support@eprochelpdesk.com. +91-8046010000, +91-8068948777.** The University reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reasons.

Sd/-
ESTATE OFFICER

DIPR/CP/RO1073/AAPL/2024-25

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ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ನಗರ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾನಿಲಯ BENGALURU CITY UNIVERSITY

Office of the Registrar, Central College Campus, Dr. B.R Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru – 560001. Ph.No.080-22961016 / 22131385, E-mail: registrar@bcu.ac.in

Tender No: BCU/2023-24/IND0008/CALL-2 Date: 23-07-2024

TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through E-Procurement portal only)

Name of the work	**Providing and Supply of Sports Kits to Physical Education Department, Central College Campus, Bengaluru City University, Bengaluru**
EMD	**Rs. 1,50,000/-**
Last Date For Queries	**25-07-2024 Up to 16.30 hrs.**
Last date for submission of Tender	**31-07-2024 Up to 16.30 hrs.**
Last date for submission of Sample	**31-07-2024 Up to 16.35 hrs.**
Opening of the Technical Bid	**01-08-2024 at 16.40 hrs.**

Note: Payment of Tender processing fee and EMD amount as per E-procurement Portal.

Sd/-
Registrar

DIPR/CP/1079/SSC/2024-25

BAGALKOT UNIVERSITY

(State Public University of Govt. of Karanataka)
Office of the Registrar, Mudhol Road, Jamkhandi - 587 301, Dist. : Bagalkote,
Phone : (08353) 295123, 295124, E-mail : bgkujkd@gmail.com, Website : https://bgku.ac.in

No. : B.G.K.U.J./RO/2024-25/337 Date : 22-07-2024

PRESS NOTE

Tender Notification (Through E-Procurement)

Registrar, Bagalkot University, Jamkhandi invites Tender through e-procurement for **annual rate contract of Vehicles on hire basis to Bagalkot University, Jamkhandi from 24-07-2024 Desired Eligible Suppliers / Agency may apply before 07-08-2024 by 2.00 p.m.** through **http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

For further information kindly visit University website www.bgku.ac.in or the Estate Office at University.

Sd/- Registrar,
Bagalkot University, Jamkhandi

DIPR/Bagalkote/134/Manipal/2024-25

Government of Karnataka Zilla Panchayath, Chitradurga

Panchayath Raj Engineering Division, Chitradurga-577501

e-mail: zped_cta@yahoo.com zped.cta@gmail.com Ph: 08194-222372

No: PRED/Chi/EE/Tech.Div/Tender/2024-25/735
Date: 22-07-2024

TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Through e-Procurement Portal Only)

Panchayat Raj Engineering Department of Chitradurga district has invited tenders for approved 8 works under various projects under Chitradurga District Project, the estimated amount of the said works is minimum Rs.5.50 lakhs and maximum Rs.75.00 lakhs , and total amount is Rs 135.01 lakhs

The tender processing dates are as follows:- (1) Last date and time for receipt of information about tender : 29.07.2024 at 11.00 am (2) Last date and time for submission of tenders : 30.07.2024 at 16.00 pm (3) Date and time for opening of technical bids : 31.07.2024 at 16.01 pm

For more information about the above said tender please contact support@eprochelpdesk.com or KPPP Helpdesk Phone No: 080-46010000, 080-68948777 or requested to contact office Phone No: 08194-222372 of Executive Engineer, Panchayat Raj Engineering Department , Chitradurga – 577501 during office working hours

RO.No.137:DIPR/CTA/KSMCA/2023-24

Sd/- Executive Engineer
P.R.E. Division, Chitradurga

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SYED Ruksana Banu, W/o Syed Mohammed, R/at No. 119/A, 3rd Cross, Venkataswamy Layout, Chamundinagar, R.T. Nagar Post, Bangalore-560032, have changed my name from Syed Ruksana Banu to Ruksana Banu vide affidavit dated 23-07-2024 before Notary Y. R. Chandrasekar, Bangalore.

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF 28TH ADDL. CITY CIVIL AND SESSION JUDGE, MAYO HALL AT BANGALORE (CCH-29)
O.S. No. 25843/2023
Hg- 13/08/2024

Between :
M/S ICICI BANK LIMITED
Mittal Tower, M.G. Road, Bangalore- 560 001
Represented by its officer of Power of Attorney Holder
Ms. Mansi Singh., D/o. Anil Kumar Singh, Aged about 24 years, Fxncol@yahoo.co.in
Phone No. 8041216669
...PLAINTIFF

VERSUS :
MR. RAKESH KUMAR
...DEFENDANT

Summons/Notice through Paper Publication Application U/o 5 Rule 20(1)(A) R/W 151 CPC

Mr. RAKESH KUMAR,
26 4TH MAIN ROAD, 4TH CROSS AGRAHARA DASARAHALLI, BANGALORE-560 079

WHEREAS, The above named Plaintiff has instituted a case against you for recovery loan amount Rs. 8,08,071.85 (Rupees Eight Lakhs Eight Thousand and Hundred Seventy One and paise Eight Five only) together with interest at the 24% p.a., from date of due till the date of realization.

You are hereby summoned to appear before O.S. No. 25843/2023 in Hon'ble 28th Addl. City Civil and Session Judge, Mayo Hall, (CCH-29), At Bangalore, Court in person or by an advocate/ pleader on 13/08/2024 at 11.00 AM to answer the question of the same. Faling which the matter will be heard and determined as "EX-PARTE".

Given under my hand and seal of the court on this 19 day of July, 2024.

By the order of court
Deputy Registrar
City Civil Court, Mayo Hall, BENGALURU- 560 001

Advocate for Plaintiff
FX & CO.,
ADVOCATES,
New No.99, Old No.11/
Gover Road, Cox Town,
BENGALURU- 560 005.

IN THE COURT OF 28th ADDL. CITY CIVIL AND SESSION JUDGE, MAYO HALL AT BANGALORE (CCH 29)
O.S. NO. 26088/2023

BETWEEN:
M/S ICICI BANK LIMITED
Mittal Tower, M.G. Road, Bangalore-560 001
Represented by its officer of Power of Attorney Holder
Ms. Promod G.
Aged about 48 years,
S/o. Guru Mallappa,
Fxncol@yahoo.co.in
Phone No.8050030754
...PLAINTIFF

Versus:
M/s. Sree Vasavi Communications and others
....DEFENDANTS

Summons / Notice through Paper Publication Application U/o 5, Rule 20(1)(A) R/W 152 CPC

1. M/s. Sree Vasavi Communications
Rep by its Managing
Mr. N. Ravi Prasad
No. 29, 2nd Cross, 5th Main Chikkadbiderekallu
BANGALORE-560 075.
2. Mr. Mare Gowda
M/s. Sree Vasavi Communications
No. 29, 2nd Cross, 5th Main Chikkadbiderekallu
BANGALORE-560 075.

WHEREAS, The above named Plaintiff has instituted a case against you for recovery loan amount Rs. 13,09,170/- (Rupees Thirteen Lakhs Nine Thousand One Hundred Seventy only) together with interest at the 24% p.a., from date of due till the date of realization.

You are hereby summoned to appear before O.S. No. 26088/2023 in Hon'ble 28th Addl. City Civil and Session Judge, Mayo Hall, (CCH-29), At Bangalore, Court in person or by an advocate/pleader on 09/08/2024 at 11:00 AM to answer the question of the same. Faling which the matter will be heard and determined as "EX-PARTE".

Given under my hand and seal of the court on this19th day of July, 2024.

By the Order of Court
Deputy Registrar,
City Civil Court, Mayo Hall, BENGALURU- 560 001

Advocate for Plaintiff
FX & CO.,
ADVOCATES,
New No.99, Old No.11/1
Gover Road, Cox Town,
BENGALURU- 560 005.

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **SIRI ACHAR**, W/o Sandeep Eshwar, age 27 years, R/at No 201, 1196, Satya Shankara Apartment, 9th Cross, 1st Block, 2nd Stage, Chandra Layout, Bangalore-560 040 do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **SHWETA LOHAR** to **SIRI ACHAR**, henceforth I shall be known and called as **SIRI ACHAR** for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 23-07-2024, sworn before Advocate and Notary **CHANDRASHEKARAIAH .S** at Bangalore.

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF 28TH ADDL. CITY CIVIL AND SESSION JUDGE, MAYO HALL AT BANGALORE (CCH 29)
O.S. NO. 25430/2023

BETWEEN:
M/S ICICI BANK LIMITED
Mittal Tower, M.G. Road, Bangalore-560 001
Represented by its officer of Power of Attorney Holder
Ms. MANSI SINGH..
Aged 24 years,
S/o. Mr. Anil Kumar Singh,
Fxncol yahoo.co.in
Phone No. 8041216669
...PLAINTIFF

VERSUS:
MR. PAPPU RAJASEKHAR REDDY ...DEFENDANT

Summons / Notice through Paper Publication Application U/o 5, Rule 20(1)(A) R/W 152 CPC

MR. PAPPU RAJASEKHAR REDDY
S/o Mr. Bhagavan Reddy
Aged 32 years
No. 100, 3rd Main Road
Anandagiri Extension,
Beside Police Quarters,
Hebbal, Bangalore-560024

WHEREAS, The above named Plaintiff has instituted a case against you for recovery loan amount Rs. 8,36,748.53/- (Rupees Eight Lakhs Thirty Six Thousand Seven Hundred Forty Eight and paisa Fifty Three only) together with interest at the 24% p.a., from date of due till the date of realization.

You are hereby summoned to appear before O.S. No. 25430/2023 in Hon'ble 28th Addl. City Civil and Session Judge, Mayo Hall, (CCH-29). At Bangalore, Court in person or by an advocate/ pleader on 08/08/2024 at 11.00 A.M to answer the question of the same. Faling which the matter will be heard and determined as "EX-PARTE".

Given under my hand and seal of the court on this 19th day of July, 2024.

By the Order of Court
Deputy Registrar,
City Civil Court, Mayo Hall, BENGALURU- 560 001

Advocate for Plaintiff
FX & CO.,
ADVOCATES,
New No.99, Old No.11/1
Gover Road, Cox Town,
BENGALURU- 560 005.

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF 28TH ADDL. CITY CIVIL AND SESSION JUDGE, MAYO HALL AT BANGALORE (CCH-29)
O.S. No. 25130/2023

Between :
M/S ICICI BANK LIMITED
Mittal Tower, M.G. Road, Bangalore- 560 001
Represented by its officer of Power of Attorney Holder
Ms. Mansi Singh., D/o. MR. Anil Kumar Singh Aged about 24 years, Fxncol@yahoo.co.in
Phone No. 8041216669
...PLAINTIFF

VERSUS :
Mr. MAHESH AND OTHER
...DEFENDANT

Summons/Notice through Paper Publication Application U/o 5 Rule, 20(1)(A) R/W 151 CPC

1. Mr. MAHESH
S/o Mallanna Hotappa, No.16, 4th Floor, Janatha Colony, 4th Cross Madavara, Nelmangala- 562 123.
2. Mrs. GANGAMMA
D/o Bhairappa, No.16, 4th Floor, Janatha Colony, 4th Cross Madavara, Nelmangala-562 123.

WHEREAS, The above named Plaintiff has instituted a case against you for recovery loan amount Rs. 5,60,993.11 (Rupees Five Lakhs Sixty Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety Three and Paise Elevan only) together with interest at the 9.70% p.a., from date of due till the date of realization;

You are hereby summoned to appear before O.S. No. 25130/2023 in Hon'ble 28th Addl City Civil and Session Judge, Mayohall, (CCH-29), At Bangalore, Court in person or by an advocate/ pleader on 14/08/2024 at 11.00 AM to answer the question of the same. Faling which the matter will be heard and determined as "EX-PARTE".

Given under my hand and seal of the court on this 19th day of July, 2024.

By the order of court
Deputy Registrar
City Civil Court, Mayo Hall, BENGALURU- 560 001

Advocate for Plaintiff
FX & CO.,
ADVOCATES,
New No.99, Old No.11/
Gover Road, Cox Town,
BENGALURU- 560 005.

TENDERS

STEEL & INDUSTRIAL FORGINGS LTD.
SIFL (A Govt. of Kerala Undertaking)
Ph:0487- 2201362,Mob: 9400000645
E-mail : siflmmd@gmail.com

TENDER NOTICE

SIFL:PROJECTS/24 20.07.2024

Inviting E-Tenders for Supply of

3 TON MOBILE FORGING MANIPULATOR

For detailed specification please visit our web site: **www.siflindia.com** and Kerala e- tenders web site: **http://etenders.kerala.gov.in**

(Sd/-), Managing Director

TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

Office of the Commissioner for Transport and Road Safety
1st Floor, TTMC 'A' Block, BMTC Complex, Shanthinagar, K.H. Road, Bengaluru-560 027.

No.: CT/EST-5/SR-05/2024-25/109 Date: 24.07.2024

e-TENDER NOTIFICATION

e-Tender Bid No: GEM/2024/B/5199707 is invited by Transport Department through GeM portal from registered and eligible firms to outsource required manpower to Transport Department against cadre vacancies.

Interested firms can obtain details through online at GeM portal website: **https://gem.gov.in.** Tenderers may take assistance from GeM portal help desk Toll Free Numbers: 1800-419-3436 / 1800-102-3436 and email: **helpdesk-gem@gov.in.**

Last date and time for submission of tenders through online is **23-08-2024, 5:00 pm.** For clarifications, please contact email: **jctadmn-tran-ka@nic.in**

Sd/-Additional Commissioner for Transport (Administration), Transport Department, Bengaluru.

DIPR/DD-C.P/1077/KSMCA/2024-25

KARNATAKA NEERAVARI NIGAM LIMITED

(A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)
Office of the Executive Engineer,KNNL No.2 Division,Oddarahatti
State:Karnataka Ph No: 08533-271361

No: KNNL/EE.2/TS/AE.1/Indargi&27 LIS/2024-25/653
Date:22-07-2024

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Only through e-procurement system)

On behalf of the Managing Director KNNL Bangalaore the Executive Engineer KNNL No.2 Division Odderahatti Tq:Gangavathi Dist:Koppal in Karnataka invites tenders on **LUMP SUM TURN KEY** basis on e-pocurement portal for the following work from PWD Class-I contractor for the work Lift Irrigation Scheme for filling up of Indargi and other 27 Tanks by lifting water from Tungabhadra River in Gangavathi Taluka, Koppa Operation and Maintenance for a period of 5 years after successful completion of work on Turn-Key Basis **(Indent No- KNNL/2024-25/LI/WORK_ INDENT1307)** in Two cover system i.e technical bid and financial bid under signed division. The cost of amount put to tender is Rs.149.49 Crores and EMD is Rs.1.49 Crores respectively and with a stipulated period of 24 Month Calander of events as below.

Calendar of Events (Tentative date)/Date & Time

a.The Contractor can have access to the e-tender document, i.e. the Tender schedules, bid documents and other documents in the web site ***https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in*** on payment of transaction fee (non-refundable): **22-07-2024.** b.Pre bid meeting at CE office, Munirabad: **30-08-2024 at 11.00 am.** c.Last Date & Time for Tender Queries/Clarifications: **26-09-2024 up 5.00 pm.** d.The Last date of Submission of completed Tender Documents through e-portal: **27-09-2024 up 5.00 pm** e.Date of Opening of **Technical Bid (Cover –I)** : **30-09-2024 at 11.00 am.** f.Second Electronic Document (financial Bid) will be opened OR the successful bidders who qualify in the technical bid will be opened after approval to the technical bid from the competent authority: **03-10-2024 at 11.00 am** OR after approval to the technical bid from the competent authority.

Tender will be open in this Office For any other clarification/details contact ***https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in*** or under signed office during office hours Contact No-08533-271361.

Sd/- Executive Engineer KNNL
No.2 Canal Division Odderahatti

DIPR/Koppal/194/KSMCA/2024-25

(Public Works Department)

Office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Madhugiri

No:EE/PWD/Dvn/JE/Tender/2024-25 Dated: 20.07.2024

Invitation For Tender
Tender ref no: 06/2024-25

On behalf of Governor of Karnataka, the Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Madhugiri, invites tenders from eligible Tenderers, for the works. Total 01 Works (Madhugiri Taluk) Approx. amount for the work is Rs.425.00 Lakhs. Tender documents may be downloaded from the KPPP portal of the Govt. of Karnataka Viz.http://KPPP.gov.in.Tenders must be submitted through KPPP portal on or before 22.08.2024 (up to 4.00 pm), Technical bids will be opened on 23.08.2024 after 4.15 Pm, Financial bid will be opened on 17.08.2024 after 4.15 Pm. Further any other information can be seen from the KPPP portal or can be had from the undersigned.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
PWD Division, Madhugiri

DIPR/TUM/171/KSMCA/2024-25

BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL BENGALURU BENCH AT BENGALURU

IN THE MATTER OF SECTIONS 230 AND 232 READ WITH SECTION 52 AND 66 AND OTHER APPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2013 AND READ WITH COMPANIES (COMPROMISES, ARRANGEMENTS AND AMALGAMATION) RULES, 2016

AND

IN THE MATTER OF SCHEME OF AMALGAMATION OF MICROMATIC MACHINE TOOLS PRIVATE LIMITED WITH ACE DESIGNERSLIMITED AND THEIR RESPECTIVE SHAREHOLDERS

CA (CAA) NO. 17/BB/2024

MICROMATIC MACHINE TOOLS PRIVATE LIMITED
CIN: U74899KA1987PTC105765
Plot No. 240-241, 11th Main, 3rd Phase, Peenya Industrial Area, Bangalore - 560058
...APPLICANT COMPANY NO. 1 / TRANSFEROR COMPANY

ACE DESIGNERS LIMITED
CIN: U29199KA1986PLC007816
Registered Office: Plot No. 7 & 8,II Phase, Peenya Industrial Area,Bangalore- 560 058
...APPLICANT COMPANY NO. 2 / TRANSFEREE COMPANY

NOTICE OF THE MEETING OF SECURED CREDITORS OF APPLICANT COMPANY NO.2 AND UNSECURED CREDITORS OF APPLICANT COMPANY NO. 1 & 2

Notice is hereby given that by an order dated 10.07.2024 the Bengaluru Bench of the National Company Law Tribunal has directed to convene the meeting of Secured Creditors of the Applicant Company No.2 and Unsecured Creditors of Applicant Company No. 1 & 2for the purpose of considering, and if thought fit, approving with or without modification the Scheme of Amalgamation of Micromatic Machine Tools Private Limited with Ace Designers Limited.

In pursuance of the said order and as directed therein further notice is hereby given that meetings of the Secured Creditorsand Unsecured Creditors of Ace Designers Limited (Applicant Company No.2) will be held on Thursday the 5th day of September 2024 at Plot No. 7 & 8, II Phase, Peenya Industrial Area, Bangalore- 560 058 at 10.30 AM and 12 PM respectively and the meeting of Unsecured Creditors of Micromatic Machine Tools Private Limited (Applicant Company No. 1) will be held on Thursday the 5th day of September 2024 at Plot No. 240-241, 11th Main, 3rd Phase, Peenya Industrial Area, Bangalore – 560058 at 11 AM (Physical Meetings conducted at the respective registered Offices of the Applicant Companies) at which time and place the Secured and Unsecured Creditors of Ace Designers Limited (Applicant Company No.2) and Unsecured Creditors of Micromatic Machine Tools Private Limited (Applicant Company No. 1)are requested to attend.

Copies of the said Scheme of Amalgamation, and of the statement under section 230 can be obtained free of charge at the registered office of the company or at the office of its authorized representative Mr. Saji P John, Advocate for Applicants, SPJ Legal Advocates, Unit no 306, 3rdFloor,#30, Prestige Meridian II, MG Road, Bengaluru – 560 001. The Persons entitled to attend and vote at the Secured and Unsecured Creditors meeting may vote in person or by proxy, provided that all proxies in the prescribed form are deposited at the registered offices of the companies not later than 48 hours before the meeting.

Forms of proxy can be availed at the registered office of the Company.

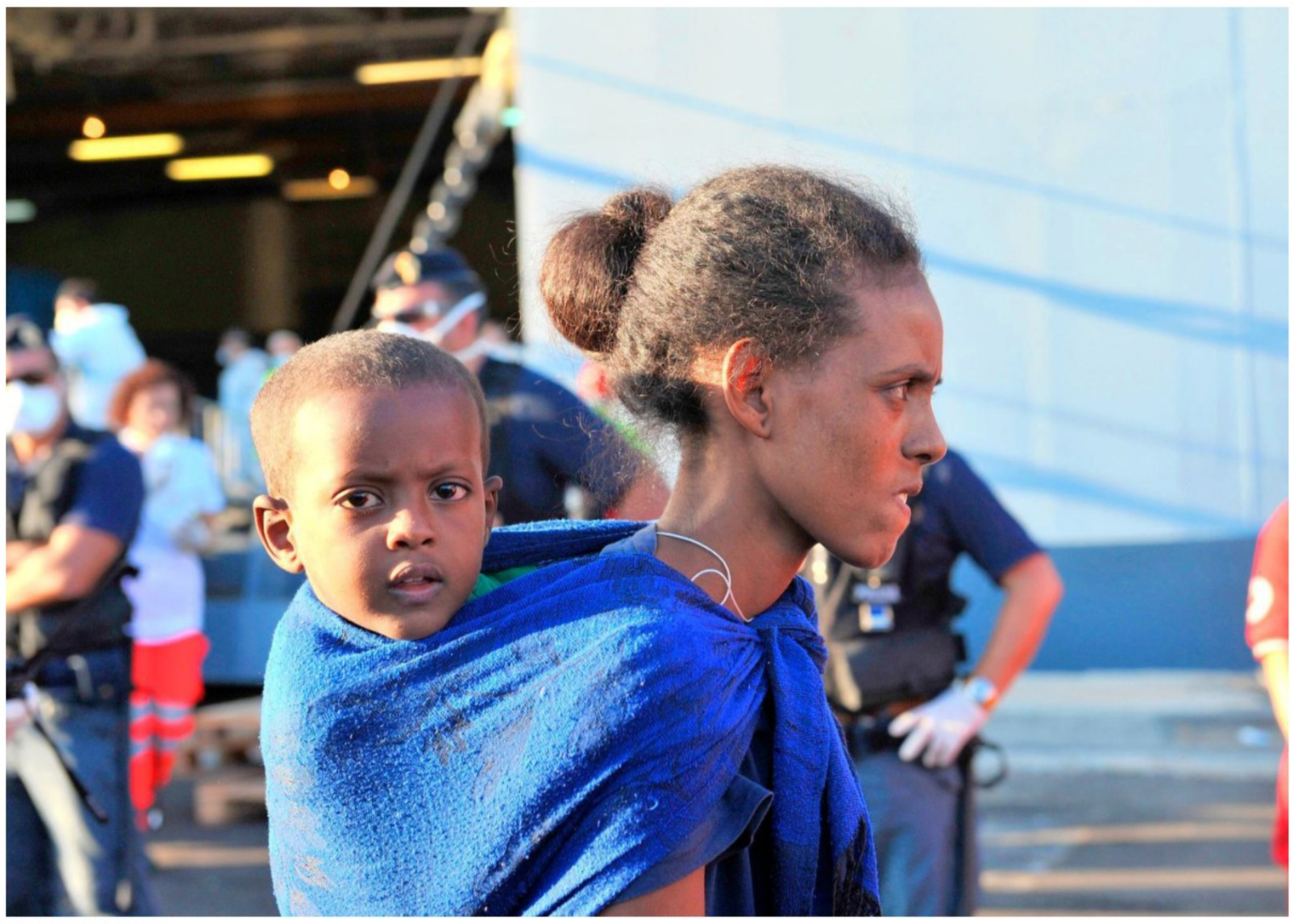
The Tribunal has appointed Mr. Uday Shankar R M,Advocate and Mr. Sarvotham P,PCS as Chairman and Scrutinizer of the meetings of Secured Creditors of Applicant Company No.2 and Unsecured Creditors for the Applicant Company No. 1& 2 The above mentioned Scheme of Amalgamation if approved by the meeting will be subject to the subsequent approval of the tribunal.

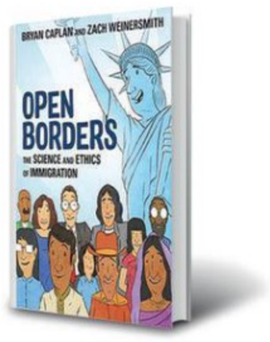
Dated this 24-07-2024

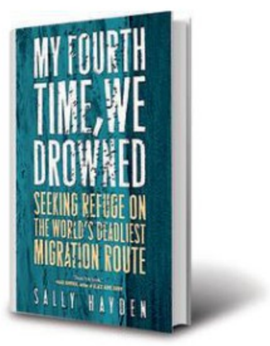
Company Secretary of Ace Designers Limited
Name: Rajesh R
Membership No: F8680

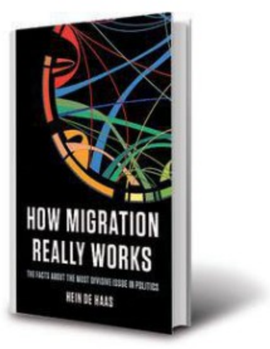
Director of Micromatic Machine Tools Private Limited
Name: **Thirumalaimuppur Kuppuswamy Ramesh**
DIN: 01790388

BIBLIOGRAPHY









Dangerous journey: A woman and child, part of a group of more than 1,370 immigrants, disembark from an Italian ship in the port of Crotone, southern Italy, in 2014. AFP

Europe bound: on the myths surrounding migrants and asylum seekers

From overcrowded boats, hostile politics, taunts of encroachment, and detention centres, writers lay down the facts on the influx of refugees and immigrants, and why countries in Europe must do better for the people flocking its shores

Joan Sony Cherian

Migration was a key issue in Europe's recent elections. In April, the European Union (EU) had voted for reforms in its migration policy to tackle how the bloc handles the influx of refugees fleeing conflict zones in Africa and Asia. From international organisations such as the United Nations to the media which show us overcrowded boats of immigrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea or politicians who ring the death knell of the 'European way of life' due to massive 'encroachment' of 'illegal' immigrants, migration policies have been at the top of every electoral agenda in the EU in the recent past.

One of the main factors being attributed to the resurgence of the right-wing in Europe and elsewhere in the Global North is 'uncontrolled' immigration. An issue which compounded after the migrant crisis of 2015-16, post the civil war in Syria, has been used by right-wing parties and groups to stoke fears of replacement, unemployment, invasion, culture clashes, crime, religious fanaticism and so on. Even sections of the left have raised apprehensions of jobs being taken over by immigrants who might be willing to work for cheaper rates and longer hours.

Not a new spectacle

However, is migration really a new phenomenon in Europe? Why do immigrants make the risky journey putting their lives at stake? Scholars are grappling with these questions and trying to spread awareness and quell fears on the impact of migration on Europe.

One such scholar, Hein de Haas, tackles these questions head-on in his book *How Migration Really Works*. He places the debate historically and states that during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, in the era of colonisation of the Global South by various European nations, Europe was a region of net out-migration, a continent of emigrants flowing to different colonies. Haas talks about how people from the colonies were first forced to immigrate to European countries or other colonies as indentured labour, especially after the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade post the American civil war. It is only after the Second World War and the establishment of the welfare state that emigration from Europe stopped.

Analysing the current situation, he deconstructs the myth that Europe is going through a phase of unprecedented migration. Using global migrant population data from the Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2017 Revision database, compiled by the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, he states that the percentage of migration as a share of world population has remained stable at 3% from 1960 till 2017. This effectively means that there has been no sudden rise in immigration, it has just increased with the increase in global population, making the rate constant. The only novelty is that the flow of migration has changed – where now instead of immigration to the Global South, it's the reverse.

On human rights

The road to Europe is fraught with dangers. Fleeing repressive governments and inhumane conditions, immigrants from West Asia and North Africa try to reach the European continent via sea in overcrowded boats. These boats are mostly provided by illegal smugglers who extort huge sums of money from refugees in order to get them to Europe. However, even then safe passage is not guaranteed. Most of these boats are intercepted and routed back while some even drown in the perilous sea. Since 2014, the International Organization of Migration has recorded over 20,000 deaths in the Mediterranean Sea.

To place a deterrent for illegal immigrants coming via boats, the government of Italy has struck a deal with Libyan coastguards to stem the influx of immigrants. The EU pledged a sum of almost 100 million euros to train and equip these coastguards over the years. These coastguards are authorised to intercept these boats and take the people in them to detention centres in Tripoli, the capital of Libya, indefinitely.

In *My Fourth Time, We Drowned*, Sally Hayden chronicles the lives of people held for years in such detention centres without any clarity, and most often undergoing torture, hunger and sexual violence. She documents how the EU and the UN are complicit in the human rights violations such detention centres commit. Hayden tells us the story of Kaleb, an Eritrean refugee fleeing an oppressive government, and his journey – not only from Libya via sea to Italy but also his journey from Eritrea to Libya via Ethiopia and Sudan. Braving smuggling rings, trafficking attempts and the moral apathy of international humanitarian organisations, hundreds of refugees like Kaleb make the journey hoping for a better life somewhere else.

A melting pot boiling over

It is not only Europe that is rallying against the boogeyman of immigration. Even in the U.S., illegal immigration has been the top agenda in the ongoing electoral race. Former President Donald Trump's 'Build the Wall' campaign and his Muslim travel ban is testament to the fact that U.S. society is growing increasingly intolerant of immigrants and refugees.

In the light of increasing polarisation around the issue, economist and graphic novel aficionado Bryan Caplan attempts to break down myths regarding immigration and its history via data and numbers through the visual medium of a comic book. *Open Borders: The Science and Ethics of Immigration*, written by Caplan and illustrated by Zach Weinersmith, advocates for complete freedom for people to move and work wherever they want without restrictions.

People fleeing repressive governments or aspiring to increase their economic stature are never a threat to democracy or prosperity.

After all, countries of the Global North still depend on their labour.

As these books clarify, it is easy for politicians and the media to point fingers at immigrants for a country's fiscal irresponsibility and incite fears of invasion and lack of integration.

There needs to be a clear restructuring about how one talks about immigration – from a perspective of fear to one based on human rights and dignity.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

The Olympic Games also has its fair share of family drama. A quiz on the Olympic achievements of star-studded families

Soorya Prakash. N

QUESTION 1
Identify the husband and wife duo who hold the record for having won the most Olympic Medals (17) from a single family.

QUESTION 2
Identify the father-son duo who hold the record of winning the most medals in Olympic history for a father and son duo.

QUESTION 3
Which Indian family has an overall haul of six Olympic medals?

QUESTION 4
Which father and son duo from India won one bronze medal each in the Olympic Games?

QUESTION 5
In Athletics, which family had three of its members win an overall haul of 12 medals in the Olympic Games?

QUESTION 6
Identify this family which had three generations winning nine Olympic medals?

QUESTION 7
Identify the family from Ethiopia which had three sisters winning Olympic medals.

Visual question:
Identify this couple who have achieved the feat of a Golden Slam in Tennis?
GETTY IMAGES

Questions and Answers to the July 23 edition of the daily quiz: 1. The number of Democrat nominees who have been elected U.S. Presidents. **Ans: Sixteen. Andrew Jackson (1829-1837) was the first Democrat nominee to become President.**
2. The number of women who have been named Democrat nominees for the U.S. Presidency. **Ans: Only Hillary Clinton in 2016**
3. The Roosevelt who was a Democrat. **Ans: Franklin D. Roosevelt (1933-1945)**
4. The three Democrat U.S. Presidents to win the Nobel Prize. **Ans: Woodrow Wilson, Jimmy Carter, and Barack Obama**
5. The 35th President of the U.S. who was assassinated. **Ans: John F. Kennedy**
6. This individual has been the only Democrat to have been a vice president with the President being a Republican. **Ans: Andrew Johnson under Abraham Lincoln**
Visual: Name this Democrat U.S. President. **Ans: Grover Cleveland, the only President to serve two non-consecutive terms**
Early Birds: Seema Das| Animesh Mohan| Kevin Toms Skaria| M. Suresh Kumar| Sadhan Kumar Panda

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

K. Subrahmanian

"The meaning of the word 'valetudinarian' (P. V. Sathyanarayana, Pithapuram)."

"This is a formal word. A valetudinarian is a 'person who pays excessive attention to preserving his health.' Such a person worries about his health all the time. Even when he is perfectly normal, he imagines that there is something wrong with him. Another word which is used more often to refer to such people is 'hypochondriac'. 'Vale' in 'valetudinarian' is pronounced like the word 'valley.' The 'tu' is pronounced like the 'tu' in the word 'tube.' The fourth syllable 'di' is pronounced exactly like the 'di' in the word 'dinner.' The 'a' which occurs in the fifth syllable 'na' is like the 'air' in 'pair.' The 'ri' sounds like the 'ri' in 'reply' and the final 'an' is pronounced like the 'an' of 'another.' The stress is on the fifth syllable of the word 'na.' The word is from Latin 'valetudinarius' which means 'in ill health.'"

"Meaning of the word 'Civvy Street' (P. Ramesh, Gandhigram)."

"This is a slang expression used in British English. Civvy Street refers to 'ordinary life and work which is not connected with the armed forces.' 'Civvy' is an abbreviation of 'civilian.' If someone says that he/she is in Civvy Street, it means that he/she is leading the life of civilian.

Major Gundappa says he has a very secure job in the army. His son who is in Civvy Street keeps changing his job every two months.

"Men," said the Captain, "We have certain rules here. And rules are meant to be strictly followed. Remember, you're no longer in Civvy Street."

"Meaning of 'He is about to start' (K. Raj Mohan, Kodaikanal)."

" 'He is about to start' means he is on the point of starting.

She came in when I was about to ring her up.

'Be about to do something' is an idiom which means 'intend to do something immediately, be on the point of doing something.' The negative of the idiom means 'not likely or keen to do something.' 'I am about to leave' means I am on the point of leaving. 'I am not about to leave' means 'I am certainly not leaving.' Often the negative is used to express one's unwillingness emphatically. It was first used in this sense in American English and is now used in British English also."

" 'Are Fowler's comments on 'galore' still valid?' (M. N. Roy, Agra)."

"Here is what Fowler says about 'galore' in his Modern English Usage: 'An Irish or Gaelic word, and no part of the Englishman's natural vocabulary, except as a jocular colloquialism (whisky galore!), is chiefly resorted to by those who are reduced to relieving dullness of matter by oddity of expression.' No. This Irish word has become assimilated into the mainstream of the language. It has found its way into dictionaries. Nowadays the word is used in informal contexts. The word means 'in plenty.' It always follows a noun. Garlands galore. Legends galore. Chairs galore."

Published in The Hindu on October 5, 1992.

Word of the day

Inimical: not friendly

Synonyms: ill will, hostility

Usage: *The policy was inimical to the country's interests.*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/inimicalpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ɪˈnɪmɪkəl/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

GOVT. OF PUNJAB

Punjab Land of Unlimited Opportunities

Whether it's crop prices or natural calamities

Chief Minister

Bhagwant Singh Mann

is always standing

with farmers

Bhagwant Singh Mann
Chief Minister, Punjab

- Over **28% surge** in direct paddy sowing area
- Farmers received **₹1,500 per acre** as financial assistance
- Restored **15,914 watercourses** to ensure canal water reaches the tail-end areas
- **124.56 lakh** metric tons of wheat purchased and **₹28,289.57 crores** paid to farmers **within 24 hours**

2220/13/240/2023/35960

Information and Public Relations Department, Punjab

SNIPPETS

Cong. issues whip to its MLCs

The Congress has issued a whip to its members in the Legislative Council asking them to remain present in the House on Thursday and Friday as some important Bills are scheduled to come up for discussion. According to the whip issued by Saleem Ahmed, Chief Whip of the government in the Council, the members have been asked to remain present in the House all through the proceedings on both days. The strength of Congress in the 75-member House is 34, while the NDA has 38 seats – 30 of BJP and eight of JD(S).

Department may fall short for Shakti scheme: Minister

Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy on Wednesday said ₹5,015 crore was allocated in the Budget towards the Shakti scheme this year and acknowledged that the department was likely to fall short of the needed amount to reimburse the road transport corporations. There are dues of ₹1,413 crore for the last year, and he had brought it to notice of the Chief Minister, he said. "We are expecting to fall short of the allocated sum by a small margin. That will be made good," he said.

Five townships to be developed

The Karnataka Housing Board will develop five townships in the State, Housing Minister B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan told the Legislative Council on Wednesday. He said it had been found that developing a township in land parcels below 1,000 acres is not viable. "So far, the KHB has developed a township near Anekal. We will develop five townships in the coming days. I am not going to name the places as land acquisition becomes difficult if areas are named," he said.

Oppn. resorts to night-long dharna demanding debate on MUDA scam

BJP, JD(S) members upset over denial of nod for discussion on alleged irregularities; demand for CM's resignation made in Assembly and Council

IN THE LEGISLATURE

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Night-long dharna: (From left) Opposition legislators protesting in the corridors of the Vidhana Soudha against the State government on Wednesday and BJP leaders B.Y. Vijayendra and R. Ashok fast asleep in the House.

The Opposition BJP and JD(S) resorted to a night-long dharna in both Houses of the legislature on Wednesday demanding permission to discuss alleged irregularities in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA), including allotment of 14 alternative sites to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's wife.

The Opposition members, led by Leader of the Opposition R. Ashok, stayed back in the Assembly hall while their counterparts in the Council, led by Chalavadi Narayanaswamy, stayed back after the Houses were adjourned for the day and continued their protest. They displayed placards and raised slogans against Mr. Siddaramaiah and demanded his resignation, accusing his family of gaining hold on a piece of land belonging to a Dalit person and later getting alternative sites from MUDA for this land.

The Opposition resorted to the protest after the presiding officers of both Houses denied them permission to take up a discussion on the alleged irregularities in MUDA citing technical reasons.

In the Assembly, the Opposition members sought to raise the issue through a censuring clause, while alleging that the irregularities were of the magnitude of ₹3,000 crore and involved the family of the Chief Minister. They alleged that the government constituted a judicial commission to look into the alleged irregularities just a few hours before the commencement of the monsoon session of the legislature only to prevent any legislature debate on the issue.

Law Minister H.K. Patil argued that the issue could not be taken up for discussion as it was not a matter of "urgent public importance" as the sites were allotted several years ago to the Chief Minister's wife, Parvathi, in lieu of MUDA taking over her 3.16 acres of land for conversion. After hearing the views of both the Opposition and government, Speaker U.T. Khader denied permission to initiate a debate on the alleged MUDA scam.

Angry with Speaker

Angered by this, the Opposition members accused the Speaker of being partisan while pointing out that just a day ago, he had permitted Congress member K.M. Shivalinge Gowda to discuss issues related to an FIR against the Enforcement Directorate that is probing the irregularities in the Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation. Countering this, Mr. Siddaramaiah told the Opposition members to obey the ruling given by the Speaker and not to precipitate the matter.

Angered by this, the Opposition members began a dharna holding placards. They shouted slogans against the Speaker. However, the Speaker continued with the House transactions and even allowed the government to table six Bills that were not listed in the agenda. In addition to this, three other Bills were adopted and the money Bill too was passed amid the din.

Though the House was adjourned for some time to restore order, that did not help as the Opposition members continued their dharna in the Well when the House resumed. Following this, the Speaker adjourned the House for the day after transacting for some time.

However, the protesting Opposition members refused to budge and declared that they would embark on a night-long dharna.

The Council too witnessed similar scenes with the House being adjourned once to restore order as the Opposition members resorted to protest demanding resignation of Mr. Siddaramaiah.

BJP leaders issued a media statement in the night saying that they had refused to accept the offer of Mr. Khader to arrange dinner for them.

Appropriation Bill adopted without discussion amid din

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Amid protests by BJP and JD(S) members, the Legislative Assembly on Wednesday adopted the Karnataka Appropriation Bill without any discussion.

The Bill piloted by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who also holds the Finance portfolio, seeks to authorise payment of a total of ₹8,573.71 crore from the Consolidated Fund of Karnataka towards various services.

Amendment Bills

The Assembly also adopted the Karnataka Irrigation (Amendment) Bill that seeks to prevent illegal tapping of water from canals by proposing a two-year jail term for the offence, the Karnataka Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, and the Karnataka Municipalities and Certain Other Legislations (Amendment) Bill without any debate.

Not on agenda

In addition to this, six Bills that were not part of the original agenda were introduced in the Assembly.

They included the Karnataka Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment) Bill, Sri Renuka Yellamma Temple Development Authority Bill that seeks to constitute an independent statutory authority for the development and maintenance of Sri Renuka Yellamma temple in Saundatti taluk of Belagavi, the Karnataka Land Revenue (Second Amendment) Bill, the Karnataka Medical Registration and Certain Other Law (Amendment) Bill, and the Karnataka SC, ST and OBC (Reservation of Appointments etc.) (Amendment Bill).

Ropeway for Nandi Hills

Meanwhile, decks are set to be cleared for the ropeway project at Nandi Hills as a Bill titled Karnataka Government Parks (Preservation) (Amendment) Bill that seeks to provide two acres of land for the development of the upper terminal point under the Nandi Hills Ropeway Project under PPP model for a 30-year period was tabled in the Assembly on Wednesday.

Members express outrage over functioning of residential schools run by Social Welfare Dept.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Members cutting across party lines on Wednesday expressed outrage over the functioning of the Social Welfare Department, headed by Minister H.C. Mahadevappa, saying that students of residential schools and hostels, both pre-matric and post-matric, run by the department have been denied quality education, food, accommodation, and safety, especially for teenage girl students.

Shortcomings in hostels

During the question hour in the Legislative Assembly, Congress member Rupakala M. (KGF) explained the shortcomings of residential schools run by the department and said the education of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students had been adversely affected by inadequate teaching staff, toilets, lack of cleanliness, and supply of poor quality of food in hostels. Some of the hostels that have no facilities have been overcrowded and the Deputy Directors of the department have become "food contractors" in hostels.

Priyank Kharge FILE PHOTO

Instead of spending ₹1,300 crore a year on the construction of community buildings, she urged the Minister to spend more funds on the education of SCs and STs.

Outsourced staff

Another ruling Congress member, P.M. Narendraswamy, said contract business was widespread in the construction of buildings of the Karnataka Residential Educational Institutions Society (KREIS). The KRIES schools have only 20% permanent teachers while 80% teaching faculty was outsourced.

He demanded the appointment of women wardens in girls' hostels. "The Social Welfare Department has failed in managing the educational institutions as a whole," he claimed.

S. Suresh Kumar (BJP) said a class 8 student at a residential school in Hiriyur in Chitradurga district and a class 7 student at Morarji Desai School in Haveri district had ended their lives. "Children are depressed without a home environment," he said and urged the government to pay attention to providing counselling to students.

Focus on education

In the absence of Mr. Mahadevappa, Minister for Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Priyank Kharge replied and asked members of both Opposition and ruling parties to pass a resolution to stop the construction of community halls and instead allocate more funds for providing education to students belonging to SCs and STs. Mr. Kharge said 821 KREIS schools and colleges are functioning in the State and 2,11,920 students are allowed to study annually. A total of 1,91,448 are studying from class 6 to class 12 and 40,555 students are enrolled every year to class six, he said.

He said it was proposed to provide counselling to students by roping in local NGOs. The student-toilet ratio in hostels is 1:7 or 1:9. However, in some hostels the ratio was 1:21, he added. Mr. Mahadevappa, who arrived late to the House, said efforts would be made to improve the quality of education in residential schools.

Opposition members accuse Speaker of being partisan

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

> If I allow your notice for discussion, then I will be setting a wrong precedent. I am only going by the rule book.
>
> **U.T. KHADER,** Speaker

BJP and JD(S) members targeted Speaker U.T. Khader on Wednesday by accusing him of being partisan after he denied permission to them to take up a debate on the alleged irregularities in the allotment of 14 alternative sites to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's wife by the Mysuru Urban Development Authority.

Leader of the Opposition R. Ashok and former Minister V. Sunil Kumar led the attack by taking exception to the Speaker denying permission to them to take up a discussion on MUDA irregularities though he had granted permission to a Congress member to discuss the complaint against the Enforcement Directorate which is probing irregularities in the Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation.

While Mr. Sunil Kumar accused the Speaker of "insulting his seat", Mr. Ashok remarked that "Mr. Khader is more suitable to become KPCC president than being a Speaker".

Defending his ruling against allowing discussion, the Speaker said the rules concerned did not allow any old issue to be taken up for discussion under the censuring clause through which the Opposition members tried to initiate the debate. "If I allow your notice for discussion, then I will be setting a wrong precedent. I am only going by the rule book," the Speaker made it clear.

State spent ₹4,047 crore on drought relief in 2023-24: Revenue Minister

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The State government disbursed drought relief to the highest number of farmers during 2023-2024, with 38.78 lakh farmers receiving compensation, Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda said on Wednesday. So far, ₹4,047 crore has been spent on drought relief compensation in the State.

Giving details: Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda speaking in the Legislative Council on Wednesday. K. MURALI KUMAR

Who got relief

"The previous highest number of farmers receiving compensation was 23.42 lakh. In the last four years, 14.41 lakh farmers received drought relief. Farmers who have seen 33% of their crops getting damaged have received compensation. In the irrigated land, those farmers who received water for their crops have not been compensated while farmers in the canal's tail end who did not receive water have been compensated," the Minister told the Legislative Council. He was responding to a question asked by the newly appointed Leader of the Opposition Chalavadi Narayanswamy on behalf of Keshavprasad of the BJP.

In addition, Mr. Gowda said that the government for the first time spent ₹531 crore to pay compensation for the loss of livelihood that benefitted 17.8 lakh farmers' families. The compensation payment process was ongoing, he said. When BJP members accused the State government of not doing enough, he said, "Apart from the Central grant of ₹4,063 crore for drought relief of which ₹3,454 crore (about 74%) has been disbursed, the State government has also spent ₹1,296 crore on providing relief to farmers. While ₹85 crore has been spent on fodder and providing water, ₹200 crore has been spent on long-term drought relief work."

SC intervention

The Minister also said that though Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra approached the Centre for drought relief along with Karnataka, only Karnataka received the relief. "For the first time, Karnataka approached the Supreme Court and got relief of ₹3,454 crore. If we had not gone to court, we would not have received anything and the Centre did not have the intention to pay us relief."

On complaints that many farmers had not received insurance amount, he said, "Only after Karnataka raised the issue of farmers who have been compensated by drought relief not receiving insurance that the Centre changed the drought relief manual. When I pointed this out at a meeting with the Home Minister and said that such a measure would only help insurance companies, it has been dropped. If there are any such case, it can be set right."

'We will revise disability pension subject to Centre enhancing its contribution'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The State government will decide on hiking the monthly pension amount for the differently abled based on the Centre's decision, Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda told the Legislative Council on Wednesday.

In response to a question from BJP member Y.M. Satish, the Minister said Karnataka was among the States paying the highest number of pensions in the country.

Spending on pensions

"The State government is spending ₹10,500 crore towards social security pensions to about 78.14 lakh beneficiaries. During the pre-Budget meeting, I raised the issue of enhancing the contribution of the Centre towards pensions and increasing the number of persons eligible for pensions. The Centre's contribution to pension was last revised in November 2012 and it is around ₹200 to ₹300 whereas the State contribution ranges from ₹1,400 to ₹2,000. Also, the Centre has accepted that only 13.96 lakh pensions need to be enhanced," explained the Minister.

He said that the Union Finance Minister seemed convinced about the need to enhance the pension amount. "We will take the decision based on what the Centre decides on it."

Earlier, Mr. Satish urged the government to enhance the disability pension of ₹1,400 to those with 40% to 75% physical disability and ₹2,000 provided to those suffering from over 75% disability or mental illness. "The pension was last revised in 2021 and it needs to be revised periodically," he said.

‘We have failed to convince people of the importance of native language education’

Among the new KDA chairperson’s plans are developing century-old government schools into model schools, and protecting minor languages within Karnataka

INTERVIEW

Prof. Purushothama Bilimale

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

Children at the Government Model School at Sarakki and (right) at the Government Kannada Model Primary school Ganganagar. FILE PHOTO

Prof. Purushothama Bilimale, scholar and former head of the Kannada Language Chair of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), recently took charge as the chairman of the Kannada Development Authority (KDA), a body working for the development of the Kannada language.

He spoke to *The Hindu* about the projects he plans to implement and his vision for KDA, including special programmes for Bengaluru, teaching Kannada to non-Kannadigas and helping Kannada-medium schools.

What are your priorities as the KDA chairman?
My top priority is to convey the history and culture of Karnataka, a *Sarva Janangada Shanthiya Thota* (a peaceful garden for all faiths), to the younger generation. I plan on developing schemes that can be implemented in a constructive manner without too much financial burden, within a stipulated time frame.

The State government has temporarily halted the jobs-for-locals Bill following an industry uproar. What are your thoughts on it?
The Authority has taken action to implement 14 of the 58 recommendations of the Sarojini Mahishi Commission report submitted in the 1980s... After becoming the Authority’s Chairman, I submitted a request to the government

Prof. Purushothama Bilimale

to implement them. However, it is true that in the current scenario, courts have not upheld such policies on reservation.

A proposal will be submitted to the government to draft a Bill that offers reservations for Kannadigas in private firms - 75% in group ‘C’ and ‘D’ posts, and 25% in other posts. During the discussion in the Legislature, the ratio can be negotiated. Reservation in employment for locals can be implemented without jeopardizing the federal structure.

But previous initiatives such as the Kannada Language Comprehensive Development Act, 2022, fell by the wayside...
In 2023, the government accepted the Act and issued a gazette notification. However, nothing happened after that. For example, Kannada as the medium of instruction in schools is emphasised in the Act. However, the Minister of School Education and Literacy is encouraging English medium education and approving English medium in government schools. I objected to this move of the government and registered my protest.

Government schools in rural areas, mostly in Kannada medium, are closing due to a decline in enrolment. How do we sustain them?
We have the Delhi model school development before us. As soon as Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal came to power, the Delhi Board of School Education conducted a study on why private schools attract parents and children. Good infrastructure including buildings, clean toilets, drinking water, playgrounds, use of modern technology like projectors and computers, and so on attract parents and children to private schools. Based on this study, the Kejriwal-led government improved the infrastructure. His government had earmarked 33% of the total budget for education. All vacant posts of teachers have been filled. Government schools have been developed to be competitive with private schools.

Consequently, in the last decade, some private schools in Delhi have reached the point of closure due to poor enrolment. At the same time enrolment in government schools has increased gradually. In Karnataka too, parents will enroll their children in government schools if good buildings, basic facilities and full-fledged teaching staff are provided.

Why are you opposed to English medium in government schools?
I agree that children need English in a shrinking world. However, if Kannada medium is made compulsory till Class 5 and English is taught from Class 1 as a language, Kannada schools will also survive. This way, children would also learn the languages better. But the governments do not understand this. We have completely failed to convey the importance of native language education to parents and citizens alike. I have visited many countries and no linguist in the world has ever said that there is no need to teach in the mother tongue. If we, who have not developed our government schools, start English medium to hide that failure, the problem will only worsen.

Do you have any specific plans for the revival of government schools?
There are hundreds of century-old government schools in the state. I have written to the Department to give a list of such schools. My dream is to develop these schools as ‘model schools’. I plan to visit these schools, verify the facilities, and see what they require. If the government does not provide the money, I will go to the public, alumni and donors and collect the funds to develop such schools. This campaign will be launched on November 1, 2024, and I have a target of developing at least 50 centenary schools by March 31, 2025.

What are your plans for the development of Kannada language in the state?
It is essential to inform the students about the harmonious culture of Karnataka. A hundred books - 72 pages each - covering the history and culture of Karnataka will be published by the Authority. They will be systematically delivered to school and college children, free of cost. In addition, conventions and workshops will be organised regionally.

Toponymy (study of place names) is important if one wants to know more precisely the linguistic-cultural-historical significance of a particular region. Writer Shamba Joshi drew our attention to this a long time ago. Behind every town name, there is a cultural history. But, in recent days, the trend of adding the name of the town on name boards has decreased. Some names are being distorted unnecessarily. A public campaign will be started with the help of National Service Scheme (NSS) volunteers to add town names to name boards.

Is there a plan to formulate a language policy for the protection of minor languages?
When many indigenous languages, including Kannada, are facing threats, the role of an organisation like the KDA is crucial. According to UNESCO, 172 languages in India, including several languages in Karnataka, are endangered. In the face of such a crisis, the KDA must do things comprehensively and seriously. It needs to equip Kannada and the minor languages of Karnataka to face the challenges of globalisation.

Work needs to be done to overcome the Constitutional difficulties of making the state language compulsory at the primary level. Karnataka needs to formulate a language policy to protect and preserve languages such as Urdu, Koraga, Kodava, Badaga, Siddhi, Kurumba, Worli, Chenchu, Irula, Gauli, Yerava, Soliga, Bari, Badaga among others. This kind of work can be a model for the whole country.

What are your plans to teach Kannada to non-Kannadiga people?
As a result of globalisation, today, a large number of non-Kannadigas live in Bengaluru, Mysuru and other cities in the State. There is a plan to teach elementary Kannada (listening, speaking, reading and writing). These classes are held three days a week from 6 p.m. to 7 pm. About 250 people have already approached the Authority in this regard. Action will be taken to teach Kannada to residents in apartments and the employees of multinational companies. Some private medical colleges have also requested the Authority to teach Kannada to their students from other states.

Will you put pressure on the Union government regarding the establishment of Kannada Classical Language Centre?
Even 14 years after the recognition of Kannada as a classical language, the Kannada Classical Language Centre is not under the purview of the State government. The Authority has informally constituted a committee headed by the Deputy Director of Parliament in New Delhi to enforce the Union government’s rules. The Authority will endeavour to bring Kannada Classical Language Centre under the State government.

‘New criminal laws lack transparency, they are more draconian’

Discussion on the new laws underscore importance of transparent and inclusive lawmaking processes in diverse sections of Indian society

Diya Vinekar
BENGALURU

An informal discussion on the new criminal laws by the Alternative Law Forum in Bengaluru on July 18.

The new criminal laws that came into effect on July 1 have garnered attention and generated controversy. The amendments have raised concerns over social equity, caste justice, feminism, and overarching principles of justice. Additionally, there is much ambiguity in their implementation.

“It has been brought about in such a non-transparent manner, that it takes you much effort to find out what are these changes that they have even made,” exclaimed Advocate Maitreyi Krishnan, President of the All India Lawyers Association of Justice (AILAJ). She was speaking at a discussion held by the Alternative Law Forum (ALF) on “Decoding the New Criminal Laws: A Social Justice Perspective” on July 18.

The session also featured Dr. Mrinal Satish, Professor at National Law School India University (NLSIU), Bengaluru.

One of the primary changes introduced was the renaming of the Indian Penal Code to Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), symbolizing a shift from ‘punishment’ to a broader notion of ‘justice’. However, it has been pointed out that this renaming ironically included increased sentences for numerous offenses and heightened minimum punishments.

Ironical in nature
“What do you mean by ‘Nyaya’ in this context? The BNS actually increases sentences for over 40 offenses, and it increases minimum punishment for another 40,” pointed out Dr. Satish. Such changes exacerbate existing inequalities by disproportionately impacting vulnerable communities.

The expansion of powers under the new laws has been a subject of significant concern.

For instance, the amendments allow for extended periods of police custody without strong procedural safeguards.

The speakers highlighted the vagueness in the language of certain provisions, which allows for broad interpretation that can be used against marginalised communities. For example, the revised sedition law, despite its change in terminology, retains the essence of the colonial law, historically used to suppress dissent, raising alarms about potential abuses of power, especially in cases involving certain communities.

Balanced legislation
Additionally, the establishment of stringent anti-terrorism measures in everyday criminal law has also raised concern. Both speakers called for balanced legislation that safeguards both national security and individual civil liberties.

It was further noted that while the amendments claim to modernise the legal framework, they might perpetuate further biases. For instance, concerns were raised about provisions that could criminalise activities traditionally associated with minority groups, such as land grabbing among small farmers and informal settlers. Additionally, social calls for the criminalisation of marital rape have not been addressed, and in some cases, lesser punishment for rape during marital separation was flagged.

Constitutional values
The session underscored the importance of transparent and inclusive lawmaking processes that genuinely reflect the diverse sections of Indian society. “We must ensure that legal reforms uphold constitutional values and protect the rights of all citizens,” emphasised Dr. Satish, urging the administration and legal professionals to remain highly vigilant in safeguarding fundamental freedoms while navigating such laws.

“I think it is important for all of us to also recognize that it is necessary for us to really understand and recognize that these laws will affect all of us, so paying attention to the changes becomes vital,” added Advocate Krishnan.

Currently, many state governments, including Karnataka, have constituted expert committees to examine these laws and their applicability in the state context.

Other legal forums have also come together to discuss potential reforms, emphasizing the need for continuous scrutiny and public discourse to ensure equitable justice and uphold constitutional principles.

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 25, 1974

Relief Works in Scarcity Areas: Minister’s Assurance

Bangalore, July 24: The Finance Minister, Mr. M.Y. Ghorpade said here to-day that the Government was ready to provide employment to any number of persons in areas experiencing scarcity conditions in the State due to vagaries of monsoon.

Mr. Ghorpade who returned here this morning after a tour of Hassan and Mysore districts to study the seasonal conditions, told newsmen that there were no drought conditions anywhere and it was wrong to spread a “drought psychology” in the State. He said that the situation was not alarming and the temporary hardship caused to people in some areas were due to vagaries of monsoon. The situation could not be compared to the drought experienced in the last two years. The State Government was confident of tackling the present situation within the budgetary allocations for 1974-75. He did not contemplate seeking central assistance at present.

Rs. 20,000 Stolen From Bank

Mysore, July 24: A sum of Rs. 20,000 was stolen from the main branch of a city bank yesterday. It is stated that an officer of the bank had brought three bundles of Rs. 100-rupee notes amounting to Rs. 10,000 each to pay to a constituent. While he was counting the notes, he received a phone call. Keeping one bundle in his hands, he attended to the phone call. On his return, he found the other two bundles which he had kept on the table missing.

GIG GUIDE

To a different beat

This weekend treat your feet to an eclectic choice of music that arrives in the city from all over

ANURAG TAGAT

Zygnema, Chronic Xorn, R.A.I.D.

July 27, 7 pm onwards
Fandomat Gilly's Redefined, Koramangala
Tickets:₹499 onwards via Insider.in, plus ₹500 cover charge at the door

As part of their Trinergic Tour across India, three metal bands are bringing diverse styles to the city this week, all performing on the back of releasing new material. Kolkata metal band Chronic Xorn return in anticipation of their upcoming album, which recently saw the release of the song 'Howls of Mothers'. Hyderabad hardcore-informed metal band R.A.I.D. are on the lineup as part of their launch tour for *Dominion* their EP, which released earlier this year and showcased a new direction for the metallic hardcore act.

The night is topped off by Mumbai metallers Zygnema, who released their new EP *Iconic* recently. Guitarist Sidharth Kadadi says, "As a band, we have always enjoyed playing club shows and Bangalore has been one of our favourite cities to perform. The last time we played a club gig in Bangalore was way back in 2017 at The Humming Tree. Pretty excited to come back to Bangalore for the second time in a year to promote our new EP *Iconic*."

Interestingly, both Chronic Xorn and Zygnema performed in the city just earlier this year, as part of metal festival Bangalore Open Air in February.

Soulgroove

July 26, 8 pm onwards
ZLB23, The Leela, HAL Old Airport Road
Tickets: RSVP on Skillboxes.com or WhatsApp for confirmation on +91 9632060433

Shillong act Soulgroove stop by the city as part of their nationwide India On Fyah tour, bringing their distinct blend of reggae and soul. Formed in 2017, the core trio of Soulgroove includes founders (and siblings) Elza Rymbai, who is singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist and her drummer brother John Patric Rymbai, plus singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Zediah 'Zed' Hynniewta. Members joining Soulgroove on stage include keyboardist Kynsai Manners, DJ-producer and keyboardist Manavon Massar and bassist Nash Lyngdoh.

A press release for Soulgroove reads, "They have been actively gigging in and around the region (of North East india) for the past few years. Having honed their live musical skills they are now all set to embark on their maiden tour across the country. When playing live, they are joined by a host of young talented session musicians who all hail from Shillong."

Jatayu

July 28, 7:30 pmonwards
Fandomat Gilly's Redefined, Koramangala
Tickets:₹699 via Insider.in, plus ₹500 cover charge at the door

Chennai-based quartet Jatayu have long been regular performers in the city. They had earlier performed at ZLB23 as part of the Magnetic Music Season 2 and kicked off the year with a set at Oddball Festival to showcase just how quirky their sound is. After all, it has taken them to places like the acclaimed Fuji Rock Festival in Japan in 2023.

For their third show in the city this year, they head to Fandom. The event description states, "Jatayu is back in Bangalore with an electrifying performance! Known for their powerful live shows, Jatayu promises to deliver a special set featuring classic hits and brand-new tunes. Bangalore has always been the heart of Jatayu's journey, boasting their best and biggest audiences. The band is excited to reunite with their fans in this vibrant city."

Translate ft Mossambi, Ritzzz, Raka Ashok

July 28, 8 pm onwards
Indiranagar Social
Tickets: RSVP via forms.gle/7NAmen8L3SG3iYiX6

Seasoned DJ Raka Ashok has been spinning tunes across Bengaluru and the rest of India for a few years now. This week, he launches his party series *Translate*, roping in London-based producer and DJ Mossambi as well as Bengaluru-based Ritzzz for a night of the "freshest records from the subcontinent and across the globe that is future-facing, cutting-edge, unapologetic and strictly for the dance floor".

Ashok says on his social media, "The dance floor has always been a very special place – for self-expression, without any restrictions, and in the past decade it has been very interesting to see how ravers like you (especially here in Bangalore) have responded and adapted to our ever evolving sonic landscape, making this one of the best places to party. As a DJ, it is always exciting to observe how fresh sounds translate on the dancefloor. Hence the name."

The artiste says one can expect experimental sound design fused with bass-heavy dancefloor sensibilities from Mossambi, while Ritzzz is expected to spin house, deep disco and electronica tracks inspired by the 1990s. Ashok adds about Ritzzz, "She loves to weave in breaks and acid to create a more hypnotic groove and keep the energy flowing."

CITYBEATS

Celebrating Asia

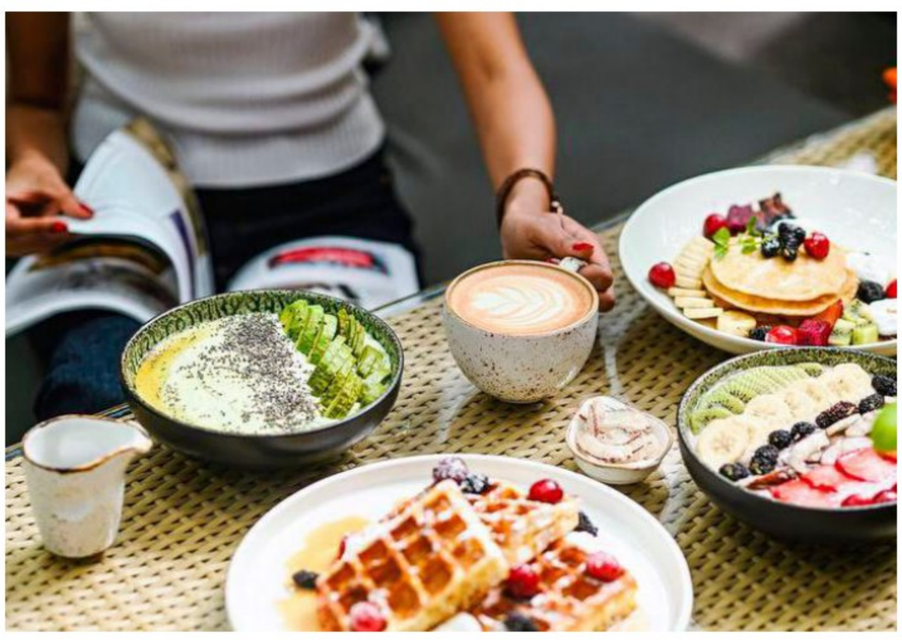
ONGOING
EIGHT, the Pan-Asian restaurant, has launched a two-month ramen and cocktail fiesta. The mixologist has created an assortment of cocktails that celebrate the rich and diverse flavours of Asia, while the ramen menu merges the flavours of Japanese and Korean cuisine showcasing international flavours and unique pairings.
Eight is at Phoenix Mall of Asia

Beat retreat

JULY 26
This one is an evening of drums, beats and bass – Bangalore Massive 030. Presented by DnBIndia in association with Welup Collective, it will feature a line-up of artists like – The Untitled One, Trishai b2b Nkshtra Insowmya and Subsystym playing drum and bass.
At Indiranagar SOCIAL, 8pm onwards.Call 8657896572/73 for details and tickets

Collage of emotions

JULY 28
Stories Through Collage is a zine-making workshop conducted by Keena (Keerthana Srinivasan), an author/illustrator of a silent picture book, a memoir for adults. It will focus on exploring relationships using abstract collage for colours, shapes and textures.
At Atta Galatta, Indiranagar. Fee is ₹400 per person and register on BookMyShow.



Something new to dig into

JW Marriott Bengaluru's Bengaluru Baking Company (BBC) has unveiled a new menu that includes a wide range of dishes and beverages. It is designed in such a way that these dishes can be savoured as a leisurely meal or as a quick bite.

The frontrunner in the list is a section from their all-day breakfast menu – Bengaluru Baking Company Benedict, egg white frittata, and an in-house, slow-fermented sourdough avocado toast with a choice of toppings.

Bread lovers can either order a quiche, gourmet sandwiches such as the BBC club or fresh salads.

The café's classic range includes Irani mutton samosas, chicken mince and mushroom pan rolls, with the crostone, a twist on pizza featuring crusty slow-fermented ciabatta as its base.

A selection of premium coffee and tea options, BBC special hot chocolates – cinnamon dark chocolate, caramel, and hazelnut – are on the menu too.

With this new menu, a Sip & Earn by Marriott Bonvoy promotion where members of the Marriott Bonvoy loyalty programme can now earn points equivalent to the total value of their coffee or tea purchase at Bengaluru Baking Company, has also been launched.

Members will also get a complimentary Marriott Bonvoy almond orange cookie with their hot beverage order.

The menu is currently available at JW Marriott Hotel Bengaluru, Vittal Mallya Road, KG Halli, Shanthala Nagar and Ashok Nagar.

For details and to book a table, call 88844 20220.

Capturing the joy of coming home

Praveen Sudevan

Ricky Kej's phone rang a few minutes after he landed at the Bengaluru airport. He was returning home from Los Angeles after winning his first Grammy in 2015. The number was unknown, but he answered the call.

"Hello, my name is Lata. I am a singer. I just called to congratulate you," said a young female voice.

"Thanks," replied Ricky, "But may I know how you got my number?" He had just landed and wasn't very pleased with a random person calling him.

"Oh, sorry. My assistant gave me your number." Then another voice spoke, "Hi Ricky, this is Mahesh. We've met before. I am Lata Mangeshkar's assistant."

Ricky, for a few seconds, was taken aback. He couldn't believe his ears. "Wow. I am really sorry. Next time, please tell me your full name. You are not just *a* singer," he told Lata Mangeshkar, "I thought it was some 16-year-old girl."

"*Sab yeh hi bolti hain* (Everyone tells me the same)," she laughed.

The conversation went on for another 45 minutes. It's one of Ricky's most cherished phone calls.

"There are a few memories like this at the Bangalore airport," he says over the phone from Bengaluru, "It's seen so much of my life - goodbyes and hellos, departures and arrivals. It connects me to the rest of the world. It's like my second home."

Happy holidays Ricky Kej (below) and a still from the anthem's music video.
YOUTUBE/KEMPEGOWDA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT BENGALURU

These emotions are reflected in the music video for the BLR Airport Anthem (composed by Ricky), released last week.

The anthem, featuring the voice of Grammy-winning singer Lonnie Park, captures the essence of travel and connection. The video includes three poignant stories that resonate with every traveller. A daughter bids an emotional farewell to her father, highlighting the bittersweet moments of departure. We see the joy and anticipation of reunions through the eyes of a little girl and her mother eagerly awaiting her father's arrival. Finally, a blind woman navigates the airport easily, experiencing its blind-friendly features emphasising inclusivity and accessibility.

The anthem's lyrics, "Nothing is too far; No matter where you are. You'll never be alone; This is the gateway to your home," match the visuals. They attempt to remind travellers that Bangalore Airport is more than just a transit point.

The anthem was not commissioned to Ricky; it was born out of a personal connection. "While waiting for my flights, I take out my laptop, put on my headphones, and start composing. So, a lot of my music was created in this airport. It's my gateway to the world, the bridge that takes me on adventures and brings me back home. So, I thought, why not write a song about it?"

The BLR Airport anthem was initially a 45-second musical snippet. He hesitantly showed it to his friend, Hari Marar, the airport's CEO, expecting feedback for later development. But the latter loved it and wanted him to create an anthem to be played at the launch of the T2 Terminal in 2022. "If you aren't making it, I am going to play this 45-second clip with my phone on a mic during the launch," he playfully threatened Ricky.

This unexpected push and his passion for the project fueled Ricky's completion of the song. A year and a half later, the anthem was ready.

The song is a catchy pop-rock anthem. He didn't fret too much about it reflecting the city's culture. "Bangalore's a city with a mixed bag of influences. So, you can't have one thing that can encapsulate it. That being said, my own identity is deeply intertwined with Bangalore. I've been here since I was six. Everything I do, everything I create, has Bangalore woven into it. So naturally, that seeps into the song," says Ricky, "The song is an extension of myself, a tribute to this city that's been my home for so long."

T.N. urges CWMA to ensure that Karnataka supplies 45 tmcft in Aug.

T. Ramakrishnan
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu, which has realised a relatively higher quantum of Cauvery water so far in the current year (June 2024-May 2025), on Wednesday urged the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) to ensure that Karnataka supplied 45.95 thousand million cubic feet (tmcft) during August.

This was why the CWMA decided to have a meeting of the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC) at short notice on July 30, said an official of the Tamil Nadu government. The quantum specified by Tamil Nadu is in accordance with the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal's final award of 2007 that was modified by the Supreme Court in 2018.

According to the data of the Central Water Commission (CWC), as on July 23, Tamil Nadu realised, at Biligundlu on the inter-State border, about 39 tmcft since the beginning of the water year on June 1. Of this, about 26 tmcft was realised during July 19-23. Consequently, the State got around 7 tmcft more than its share.

Surplus water

As flood flows continue to be let out from the Krishnaraja Sagar and Kabini dams, the quantum of surplus water flowing to Tamil Nadu is expected to increase.

At 8 a.m. on Wednesday, the water level at the Mettur dam stood at 86.85 feet (full level: 120 feet). The storage was 49.121 tmcft (capacity: 93.47 tmcft). The inflow was 60,770 cubic feet per second (cusecs), while the discharge was about 1,000 cusecs. Exactly a week ago, the storage was 15.86 tmcft and the level was 46.8 feet.

Jagan holds protest in Delhi; INDIA bloc extends support

More than 30 YSRCP workers have been killed in political vendetta, claims former A.P. CM; SP, Trinamool, and Shiv Sena (UBT) leaders visit Jagan, signalling a possible political realignment

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) chief Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy held a protest in the national capital on Wednesday, accusing the State's Telugu Desam Party (TDP) government of unleashing violence against his party. Several leaders from the Opposition INDIA bloc visited Mr. Reddy at Jantar Mantar to express solidarity with him, including Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav.

The YSRCP also exhibited photos and videos of its workers, whom it claims were injured in a recent spate of attacks, allegedly at the behest of the ruling party in Andhra Pradesh.

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav addressing the media at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on Wednesday. PTI

Mr. Reddy singled out Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's son Nara Lokesh, accusing him of spearheading these attacks and encouraging a breakdown of law and order in the State.

The presence of INDIA bloc leaders at Jantar Mantar signals a clear shift in the YSRCP's political alignment. For the last 10 years, though the YSRCP never formally joined the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance, it has leaned in favour of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government both inside and outside Parliament.

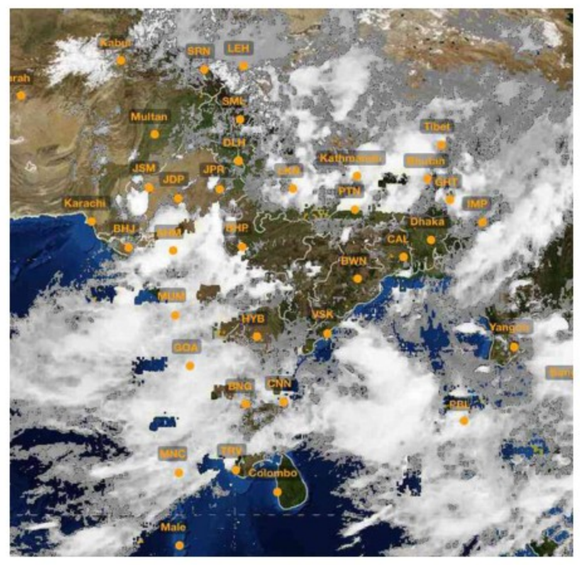
Apart from the SP chief, Shiv Sena (UBT) leaders Sanjay Raut and Priyanka Chaturvedi, the Trinamool Congress leader Nadimul Haq, and the AIADMK's M. Thambidurai were among those who condemned the alleged attacks on YSRCP workers in Andhra Pradesh.

"I would not have known the truth had I not seen the photographs and videos. Those in power should maintain simplicity, listen to others, and not take their lives," Mr. Yadav said.

The TDP, which is in power in Andhra Pradesh as well as a constituent of the NDA government at the Centre, dismissed the YSRCP's allegations as "fake drama". TDP MP Byreddy Shabari refuted Mr. Reddy's claims of 30-odd deaths in the State.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy/very heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Gujarat, east Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Yanam, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, central Maharashtra, Vidarbha, Konkan & Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Mahe

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	3	33.1	26.6	Kozhikode	22	29.9	24.2
Ahmedabad	5	32.5	26.5	Kurnool	0.1	31.3	25.4
Aizawl	—	34.2	24.0	Lucknow	0.8	34.3	28.8
Allahabad	—	37.7	28.6	Madurai	—	40.0	25.6
Bengaluru	1.8	25.5	20.2	Mangaluru	3.8	28.8	23.0
Bhopal	49	27.8	24.2	Mumbai	46	28.7	25.0
Bhubaneswar	1.8	30.4	26.0	Mysuru	0.4	28.0	—
Chandigarh	—	35.1	29.2	New Delhi	27	33.8	24.8
Chennai	—	35.8	26.4	Patna	—	34.7	28.5
Coimbatore	—	32.6	23.2	Port Blair	15	30.5	25.3
Dehradun	8	31.5	24.6	Puducherry	—	37.5	27.2
Gangtok	28	22.8	19.1	Pune	46.2	24.6	21.5
Goa	36	29.6	25.0	Raipur	76	—	24.5
Guwahati	—	37.1	28.3	Ranchi	67	30.6	24.0
Hubballi	—	27.0	23.0	Shillong	0.6	25.6	18.0
Hyderabad	0.4	26.6	23.6	Shimla	6	24.6	17.6
Imphal	—	33.0	23.7	Srinagar	—	35.6	20.5
Jaipur	0.7	33.6	27.4	Thiruvananthapuram	—	32.7	25.4
Kochi	3	31.2	24.2	Tiruchi	—	37.5	27.6
Kohima	11	26.0	17.6	Vijayawada	0.8	31.2	26.2
Kolkata	0.3	33.6	27.5	Visakhapatnam	10	29.7	25.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO 2	NO 2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.32	..27	43	 49	58	.....
Bengaluru	.19	..26	67	..... —	98	.....
Chennai	...3	8	62	... 102	91	.....
Delhi	.17	..20	84	... 118	...140	.....
Hyderabad	.11	..19	39	 53	68	.....
Kolkata	.11	..27	50	 37	41	.....
Lucknow	...9	..13	27	 62	88	.....
Mumbai	...3	..44	..6	 38	...133	.....
Pune	..—	..37	98	 23	34	.....
Visakhapatnam	...9	..41	23	 40	76	.....

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Munger, Bihar recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 207 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Aizawl, Mizoram recorded a healthy AQI score of 15

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Kerala HC stays SIC order for making Hema panel report public

K.C. Gopakumar
KOCHI

The Kerala High Court on Wednesday stayed for one week the State Information Commission's order directing the State government to disclose the K. Hema Committee report on women's working conditions in the film industry with limited redactions.

Justice P.M. Manoj passed the order on a writ petition filed by film producer Sajimon Parayil challenging the SIC order. The court directed the State government, the SIC and other respondents to file an affidavit in response to the petition.

The petitioner contended that the disclosure would violate fundamental privacy rights, breach the confidentiality promised to the witnesses, and go against public policy.

The disclosure of the report, even with purported redactions, would run the risk of identifying individuals who provided testimonies on assurances of confidentiality.

As the film industry was interconnected in its nature, making public the seemingly innocuous details of the report could lead to the identification of witnesses or complainants and would potentially expose them to retaliation or further harassment.

Moreover, the order to make the report public without prior consultation with those who testified before the commission would violate principles of natural justice and could damage their reputations and livelihoods.

During the hearing on the petition, M. Ajay, counsel for the SIC, submitted that the petitioner was trying to prevent the disclosure of the report which had been put in cold storage for the last four-and-a-half years. He argued that the public had every right to know the contents of the report since it would help improve conditions of women in the film industry.

The counsel pointed out that the commission had already taken steps to protect the privacy of individuals by redacting sensitive information. The petitioner wanted to protect his right as well as the privacy of people who complained against him.

The Hema committee, constituted in the wake of the sexual assault of an actor in 2017, submitted its report to the government on December 31, 2019. However, it has not been made public on the grounds that it contained sensitive information.

Siddaramaiah apprises Governor Gehlot of MUDA case details

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Amid speculations that the BJP and the Janata Dal (S) may take legal recourse against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on the issue pertaining to the alleged fraudulent allotment of sites to land-losers by the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA), the Chief Minister met Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot on Wednesday and apprised him the details of the case.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah called on Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot at Raj Bhavan in Bengaluru on Wednesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Sources said the Governor had sought a detailed report from the Chief Secretary on the MUDA controversy, which also involves plots given to the Chief Minister's wife Parvathi.

The Opposition has also been raising the issue of multi-crore scam in the Karnataka Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation Ltd.

Sources in the Chief Minister's office said Mr. Siddaramaiah met the Governor to discuss pending Bills and also to apprise him about developments related to MUDA and Valmiki scams.

The meeting came on a day when the MUDA issue rocked both Houses of the State legislature.

Staying afloat

Due to continuous rain, the water level of the Krishna river has been increasing. A view of the partially submerged Sangameswara temple in Nandyal district of Andhra Pradesh on Wednesday. U. SUBRAMANYAM

Bus drivers clash in A.P.'s Chittoor, one mowed down

The Hindu Bureau
CHITTOOR

A private travel bus driver's fury led to the killing of another driver, who crushed the latter and later dragged the body for about a km, at the Mahasamudram Toll Plaza in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh in the early hours of Wednesday.

According to the police, two private buses were on their way to Vijayawada from Bengaluru and reportedly kept racing with each other at several points on the national highway. At one stage, the side view mirror of one bus reportedly hit the other bus. Both drivers clashed when they arrived at the toll plaza. After crossing the point, the duo reportedly clashed again.

After a heated argument, Sudhakar Raju, the driver of Morning Star Travels bus, got off the vehicle and was standing in front of the Sri Krishna Travels bus, lodging his protest. However, the other driver, Srinivasa Rao, allegedly knocked down Sudhakar Raju and drove away at a high speed. Sudhakar Raju got trapped under the bus and his body was badly mutilated after it was dragged for a km. The passengers inside the bus and other motorists forced Srinivasa Rao to stop the bus.

Getting information from the toll plaza staff, the police rushed to the spot and took Srinivasa Rao into custody.

The deceased belonged to Reddipalem village of Guntur district. It was suspected that the accused might have been under the influence of alcohol when the incident took place.

2 Bengaluru students among five held with meth in Wayanad

The Hindu Bureau
KALPETTA

In a major drug haul at Bavali on the Kerala-Karnataka boundary on Tuesday night, the Excise sleuths arrested five persons, including two nursing students, with 204 mg of methamphetamine crystal, a premium drug that also goes by the name meth.

The arrested are K.M. Faisal Razi, 23, of Chundale; Muhammed Azunul Shaduli, 23, of Muttil; Sobin Kuriakose, 23, of Puthur Vayal in the district; P.A. Muhammed Bava, 22, of Kothamanagalam in Ernakulam district; and Delbin Shaji Joseph, 22, of Nilambur in Malappuram district. Muhammed Bava and Delbin Shaji Joseph are nursing students in Bengaluru.

They were arrested while transporting the contraband from Bengaluru to Kerala for local sale in Wayanad district in a car, the Excise Department sources said. They procured the drug from Bengaluru at a cost of ₹2 lakh and were planning to sell it at ₹4,000 per gram, the sources added.

The drug was kept in a small chamber under the steering wheel of the car, the sources said.

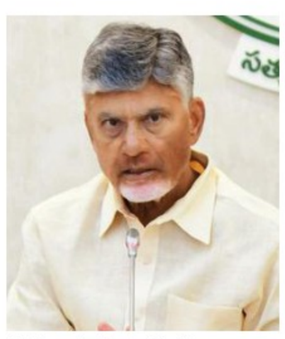
A.P. govt. orders CID probe into 'liquor scam' during YSRCP term

The Hindu Bureau
AMARAVATI

The Andhra Pradesh government has ordered an inquiry by the Crime Investigation Department (CID) into the Excise policy during the tenure of the YSRCP dispensation led by Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy.

"It is one of the biggest scams in Andhra Pradesh," Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu said while releasing a White Paper on the subject in the Legislative Assembly on Wednesday.

"It will be thoroughly probed by the CID. The State government will also refer the irregularities in cash transactions to the Enforcement Directorate (ED). There will be no political vendetta, but the government will take strict action on all those involved in the scam," Mr. Naidu said.


N. Chandrababu Naidu

Of the ₹99,413-crore worth retail sales in the last five years, digital payments were made only in respect of sales costing ₹615 crore, he said, adding "it is an irregular conduct of operation."

'Loss of ₹18,860 crore'

Suspecting illegal monetary gains, Mr. Naidu alleged that Mr. Jagan Mohan Reddy had floated benami distilleries and procured sub-standard liquor and beers from them through the A.P. State Beverages Corporation Limited.

"Due to the flawed and inconsistent policy brought by Mr. Jagan Mohan Reddy, the State exchequer suffered loss of more than ₹18,860 crore between 2019 and 2024," the Chief Minister said.

After a week, traffic resumes on Gap road stretch near Munnar

The Hindu Bureau
IDUKKI

The traffic on the Gap road stretch of the Kochi-Dhanushkodi National Highway in Munnar resumed on Tuesday. According to officials, traffic on the stretch was banned after a landslip near Periyakanal on July 16. On July 20, the District Collector had instructed the National Highways Authority of India to clear the landslip debris within two days. Following the directive, the NHAI cleared the debris on that day itself.

According to officials, the Udumbanchola tahsildar submitted a report to the Idukki Collector stating that the NHAI had already cleared the debris and the road was ready to resume traffic. However, a senior Revenue Department official said traffic resumed on the stretch only on a trial basis and that the Collector had not yet officially issued an order to resume traffic on the stretch.

Meanwhile, tourism stakeholders said that the traffic ban on the stretch is affecting tourist arrivals in Munnar. They alleged that officials are imposing a traffic ban on the route whenever a heavy rain alert is issued.

Cleansing NEET

Next year, the test must have safeguards against malpractice and inefficiency

What comes undone is best redone. The latest development in the prolonged National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) 2024 saga has played out in the court, and will answer the question raised initially – the unusually high number of toppers this year. The Supreme Court of India's ruling on the right answer to a particular physics question in the NEET paper, based on the expert opinion of IIT Delhi professionals, has brought down the number of toppers from 61 to a more reasonable number – 17. The wrong answer for the disputed question was chosen reportedly by four lakh students, including 44 in the list of toppers. As a result, all these students will lose five marks each. Ruling that there could be only one correct answer, the Court directed the National Testing Agency (NTA) to revise the scores based on the correct answer. It also emerged during the hearing that the wrong answer for the question was actually present in the older (until 2021) NCERT textbooks. The Court had earlier refused to cancel the entire NEET, which over 23 lakh applicants took. While the scheduled date of counselling, July 24, is past already, and with the NTA having to re-tally the marks with the revised answer, the counselling has been delayed again, but will take place as soon as possible.

While the scenario, as it stands today, seems ostensibly resolved sufficiently to let the process move forward, the truth is that an unprecedented number of violations have occurred in a manner that vitiated, possibly for good, the faith in NEET as a fail-safe entrance route. From charges of paper leaks, giving out the wrong question papers, damaged answer keys, impersonation by students, and an analysis of marks that showed an unusually high number of toppers from certain centres in the country, NEET-UG 2024 has been a string of bad news this year. Notably, the interventions to right the course have come mostly from the judiciary, with the executive stopping short of initiating significant or decisive action required to clean its Augean stables. For starters, the extraordinary emphasis that has come to be placed on medicine as a career choice, with over 23 lakh students hoping to compete for over one lakh MBBS seats, will have to be dialled down, with a healthy promotion of other scientific streams as viable career options. The government also has no option but to unwind the entire spool, and cast it out if it must, reorienting all systems so that the next NEET can be conducted professionally, and with adequate safeguards in place to prevent malpractice or inefficiency.

Not in order

The directives on display of names on Kanwar Yatra route must be withdrawn

The Supreme Court of India on Monday stopped the enforcement of directives issued by the Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand governments that required food stalls on the route of the *Kanwar Yatra* – an increasingly popular pilgrimage that Shiva devotees undertake – to prominently exhibit the names and other identity details of their owners and employees. Petitioners argued that the directives would result in discriminatory outcomes, besides negating the secular character of the country. The Court accepted the need for urgent judicial intervention in the matter and issued notices to the States that fall in the route – Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi and Madhya Pradesh. The case will come up for hearing again on Friday. The *yatra* takes place during the Hindu month of Shravan when those who worship Shiva – popularly known as *Kanwariyas* or *Bhole* – walk hundreds of kilometres carrying pots of Ganga *jal*, known as *kanwar* (a structure made of bamboo that has containers suspended on both sides of a pole), to the temples in their home town. The *yatra* is increasingly popular, particularly among the Dalit and Other Backward Classes in the Hindi heartland. The police in Muzaffarnagar, western U.P., were the first to issue the controversial directive last week, which they said was done to 'prevent any untoward incident'.

The discriminatory nature of this move became clear soon, and was criticised by the Opposition and National Democratic Alliance allies. Amid the criticism, U.P. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath extended the requirement across the entire route of the pilgrimage in the State. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in neighbouring Uttarakhand followed suit. Reports emerged of Hindu hotel owners being asked by the administration to remove their Muslim workers; there were also accounts of harassment of meat shop owners. BJP allies, the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) and the Janata Dal (United), joined the Opposition Congress and the Samajwadi Party in calling out the brazenly communal move of the BJP governments. Many pilgrimages in India are undertaken and organised jointly by people of different faiths, and as it turns out, there are Muslims too who trek with Hindus to take part in this unique form of Shiva worship. All along the route, they have, for years, been served by Muslim shop owners and even volunteers. Muslim artisans make a living by making the *kanwar* in some parts. The economic, cultural and social aspects of the *Kanwar Yatra* – as with any other pilgrimage – are shared by people of various sects and religions. The government directive was unreasonable and achieved nothing other than promoting communal enmity. U.P. and Uttarakhand should withdraw their directives without waiting for the decision of the Court.

Budget 2024 — long on intent, short on details

M. Suresh Babu

Director, Madras Institute of Development Studies

The short Budget speech by the Union Finance Minister is marked by clarity on three aspects. First, the intentions and vision for Vikisit Bharat@2047 are spelt out through the nine priority areas, a long-term vision, to which we expect that subsequent Budgets would adhere, to accomplish these goals. Second, there is an explicit recognition of the problem of unemployment in the economy. Addressing this has been a challenge and the Budget devotes considerable space in listing out initiatives towards generating employment. Third, the compulsions of a coalition government surface in parts, but are hidden in some of the specificities. These three have guided the strategy and the approach of the Budget. On the face of it, the policy slant reveals good intentions, but the ways and the means to accomplish the ambitious goals set out are not divulged, casting a shadow on the possibility of realising the targets set.

A signal of continuity

The fiscal arithmetic and the macro-policy stance in the Budget signal continuity and a carrying on with fiscal consolidation efforts. The overall fiscal deficit has been lowered to 4.9% compared to 5.1% targeted in the interim Budget. A large part of the surplus received from the Reserve Bank of India has been used to buttress fiscal prudence. The anticipated reiteration of the reduction in the fiscal deficit to below 4.5% of GDP in FY2026 is welcome. The new medium-term fiscal consolidation path has been linked to a reduction in the debt/GDP ratio instead of continued compression of the fiscal deficit/GDP ratio. This will allow the government flexibility to chart an appropriate fiscal course that builds in higher capital spending as well as support to meeting climate goals in an uncertain global environment.

The size of the Budget has gone up only marginally. This also means that the overall borrowing programme of the government is almost unchanged – in fact, it has come down marginally though the cut in borrowings is smaller than what could have been possible with the buoyant revenue collections.

While there has been a slight increase in overall expenditure, capital expenditure remains more or less unchanged. There are two discomforting trends on the expenditure side. First, the Budget estimates for 2024-25 show only marginal increase in allocation in most of the items of expenditure compared to that of 2023-24. In fact in some of the key items, it shows a decrease. In the case of commerce, industry and energy, we find a decline in Budget estimates for 2024-25. Second, in many items of expenditure, the revised estimates for 2023-24 are lower than the Budget estimates for the same year. Social welfare and scientific departments are notable in this context.

> The policy slant highlights good intentions, but the ways and the means to accomplish the ambitious goals set out are hazy

Effective capital expenditure, which is capital expenditure plus the grant in aid for creation of capital assets, have come down when we compare revised estimates and provisional actuals for 2023-24. The decline in revised estimates compared to Budget estimates is an indication of the lack of capacity of the government to spend, which is likely to undermine the expected multiplier effects of such expenditures. Thus, we need to wait and watch as to how much of the proposed outlays are utilised. Further, the same levels of capital expenditure imply that the government would bank more on private investments, as indicated in the Economic Survey, which has not yet registered a significant increase in recent years.

Consumption and employment

The Budget relies on two measures to bolster demand and increase private consumption. It takes the route of tinkering with the new income-tax regime to leave slightly more disposable incomes for a section of taxpayers, which is expected to stimulate demand. Given the growth in indirect tax collections, there was more room for income-tax reliefs, which could have been useful to not only stimulate demand but also increase dwindling household savings. This is an opportunity missed. Second, the Budget expects employment growth to take place, imparting more incomes, and, hence, higher demand in the economy.

The internship scheme, the direct thrust on channelling funds to first-time employees with commensurate benefits to companies to incentivise a hiring of more people and providing salary top up for first time employed are unlikely to create more jobs as they do not address the questions of social aspirations and technological changes which directly impinge labour market outcomes. Moreover, implementing these schemes is not straightforward. The internship scheme has the additional risk of becoming a short-term urban employment programme, which only creates a pool of the unemployed in the future.

Employment growth is also expected to take place with the revival of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector through the credit route with a guarantee scheme being launched, besides asking banks to have their own models for lending that is not linked with collateral. Assistance to States such as Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha and Jharkhand is also expected to give an indirect push to investment and employment along with the thrust to housing in urban and rural areas.

It needs to be noted that MSMEs need to have not only credit but also a conducive environment to operate for their growth. Hence, the efficacy of providing only credit and leaving the rest to market forces might not generate the desired results.

The omissions

Barring the announcement of tax benefits for Indian start-ups and their investors, including scrapping the contentious angel tax for all classes of investors and aligning capital gains rates between listed and unlisted equity and the increased limit of Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency Ltd. (MUDRA) loans from ₹10 lakh to ₹20 lakh, the big push for the industrial sector is conspicuously absent in the Budget. Neither was there any mention of the Railways, PLI Scheme, Gati Sakthi and the Census. The list of omissions could be longer, but a lack of clear initiatives towards the education and health sectors to tap demographic dividend might not augur well with the vision of 2047. Equally important is to strike a balance between cities and rural economy and to make a distinction between jobs and internships. With the macroeconomy well poised at the moment, some bold steps and details of the journey to 2047 could have been outlined.

The views expressed are personal

An outlining of urban transformation strategies

Sudhir Krishna

former Secretary, Urban Development, Government of India

Cities are home to about 50 crore people, accounting for about 36% of India's population. The urban population has been growing at a steady pace of 2% to 2.5% annually. The ever-growing pace of urbanisation in India calls for sustained investments, with a vision and determination. The maiden Budget of the new government has recognised cities as the growth hubs and offered many options and opportunities for the planned development and the growth of cities.

The issue of housing

The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) has been under implementation since 2015 and has provided as many as 85 lakh housing units for the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS)-Middle Income Groups (MIG) categories of population, with an investment of about ₹8 lakh crore. Of this, a quarter has been provided by the central government and the remaining by the beneficiaries and State governments. The Budget has proposed to give a further push to the scheme by announcing support for the construction of another one crore such units in urban areas with an investment of ₹10 lakh crore, which will include central assistance of ₹2.2 lakh crore in the next five years, against which ₹30,171 crore has been provided in the Budget for the current year. A part of this allocation will be available to provide interest subsidy to facilitate loans at affordable rates.

The migrant population working in industries has been surviving in general in slums and yearning for a roof over their heads and a functional housing unit close to their workplaces. The Budget has announced new rental housing with dormitory-type accommodation for industrial workers. This is envisaged to be developed in public-private partnership (PPP) mode with upfront financial support under the Viability Gap Funding (VGF) scheme. This is to the extent of 20% from the central government, with the possibility of similar support from the State government.

The core infrastructure requirement for cities includes water supply, sanitation, roads and sewerage systems. Specific to the cities, the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) provides ₹8,000 crore, which, by itself, may not appear to be very substantial. However, the Finance Minister has announced the availability of the VGF window, provided that the project is taken up as a commercial venture in PPP Mode. Most cities have, over the years, got exposed to the PPP model, and it should be possible to speed up the development of such core infrastructure, where it is unavailable and upgrade it where it exists but is inadequate.

> State governments, their municipalities and also citizens will have to take forward the provisions outlined in the Budget

The Budget Speech also mentions a huge investment of ₹11.11 lakh crore for capex in infrastructure. While this would include highways and many other sectors, cities can also make efforts to partake a share in it. Similarly, a provision of ₹1.50 lakh crore is made available to States as an interest-free loan for infrastructure development. States could use this window also, for cities.

The Smart Cities Mission, that was launched in 2015, was provided budgetary support of ₹8,000 crore in 2023-24, which has been scaled down to ₹2,400 crore in 2024-25, to take care of the remnant commitments. However, a new window, the National Urban Digital Mission (NUDM), has been opened in this Budget, with a provision of ₹1,150 crore, with a focus on the digitisation of property and tax records and their management, with GIS mapping. These will help urban local bodies in managing their finances better, and also help property owners.

On city planning

The Budget has declared the intention of focusing on the planned development of cities. Municipalities would get the normal 'Finance Commission Grant' of ₹25,653 crore. In addition, a provision of ₹500 crore has been made for the incubation of new cities. With the development of mass rapid transit systems, cities can embark on transit-oriented development, wherein transit hubs can be surrounded by denser development without creating a traffic overload on roads. Moreover, a well-designed mobility plan can conveniently connect cities with their peri-urban areas and 'new cities'. Accordingly, the Budget has announced an enhanced focus on economic and transit planning, with the orderly development of peri-urban areas utilising town planning schemes. The Budget has also proposed encouraging electric bus systems for cities and has provided ₹1,300 crore for it. E-buses offer an economical and eco-friendly operating system, but the main challenge is their higher upfront cost. However, with this budgetary support, it should get going.

Solid waste management

Solid waste management (SWM) is perhaps the biggest challenge that most cities face today. The Budget has announced a special thrust to introduce bankable projects for SWM in collaboration with State government and financial institutions. States and municipalities can also make use of the VGF for this purpose. Cities such as Indore, Madhya Pradesh, have shown the way in making SWM a financially viable proposition.

The Street Vendors Act, 2014, was enacted by Parliament to regulate street vendors in public areas and protect their rights. It also envisaged the preparation of street-vending plans and the creation of street-vending zones, with a view to make street-vending a healthy and safe option for consumers and vendors. The Budget has proposed to develop 100 weekly '*haats*' or street food hubs in select cities. Perhaps States need not feel constrained with the number and can facilitate all cities in preparing street-vending plans and developing street vending '*haats*' in various parts of the city, according to felt needs.

While the Budget has made a slew of provisions, financial as well as procedural, to push for planned urbanisation, cities, represented by the municipalities, and guided by the respective State governments, will have to show the vision and the determination to incorporate all the resources coming not only from the Union Budget but also augmented by their own resources.

Above all, the participation of citizens would remain the bedrock for the success of any city's development strategy.

The views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Union Budget

The Budget does have some trace of political optics. Though the tax regime does give some relief to the tax-payer, the question remains whether the new tax regime encourages the 'saving tendency', as in the old regime where savings did occupy a good space. It is an undeniable fact that savings are a must for a robust economy.

S. Seshadri,
Chennai

In a visual nutshell

The Budget issue (July 23) was a treat with its detailed analysis on the pros and cons of the Union Budget. But the one thing that caught my attention on opening *The Hindu* in the morning was the lead cartoon. In his uncanny whimsical manner in depicting political characters, the visualiser has brought out the feelings of the common man on the Union Budget.

Saravanan Krubapuri,
Chennai

In the jungle of write-ups and dry statistics, peppered with reactions from industry leaders showering praises on the Budget, most of which are presumptuous anyway, it were the cartoons that came as a breath of fresh air. While each one of these cartoons deserves praise for its message and artistry, the pocket cartoon ('Social sector' page, Page 7) deserves special mention.

P.S. Lourdenadhan,
Bengaluru

Despite all the analyses, it was the pocket cartoons that succeeded in effectively conveying the concerns of the general public and the youth. The cartoonist deserves much praise.

Jiji Panicker K.,
Angadickal, Alappuzha, Kerala

More than the write-ups, your cartoons conveyed the pith and the substance of the Budget. You proved that a picture is worth a thousand words.

K. Pradeep,
Chennai

C.T. Kurien

Professor C.T. Kurien was a legend who was productively invested in so many students, especially the poor and the marginalised from rural India. Though an alumni of the Madras Christian College (MCC), but not his student, I am one of many who admired him. Alumni, even today, shower praise on him for his contributions to the cause of India's speedy development. It was the first Indian Principal of MCC, Chandran Devanesan, hailing from then rustic Palayamkottai in Tamil Nadu, who recognised the spark in this great intellectual — as one eager to improve the lot of the toiling masses.

Albert Devakaram,
Chennai

Corrections & Clarifications

The last paragraph of a report, "Urban, rural land reforms by Centre; land records to be digitised with GIS mapping" (Budget 2024, 'Infrastructure', July 24, 2024), mentioned the expert's name as Deepa Jha. It should have been Deepika Jha.

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Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

A Budget that places health on the margins

K. Srinath Reddy

honorary distinguished professor at the Public Health Foundation of India

With the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic behind us (though the World Health Organization warns that the virus has still not vanished), the Union Budget expectedly shifted focus to levers of economic growth such as infrastructure and employment. It was also hoped that the recognition of population health as a vital investment for accelerating as well as protecting economic growth would see continued investment in strengthening our health systems. In the Interim Budget, the Finance Minister had announced the government's plans to "encourage" HPV vaccination to girls (to prevent cervical cancer), create a U-WIN programme for improving coverage of the routine immunisation programme, and include ASHA workers and Anganwadi workers as beneficiaries of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) health insurance programme. These have not been elaborated or presented as line items in the main Budget presented on June 23.

Comparisons

An increase in programme allocations from Budget to Budget must be calculated by comparing the budgetary estimate (BE) of this year with the BE of last year and not with the revised estimate (RE) for last year, which also features in the Budget. RE is the money actually spent, and indicates inability of the programme to efficiently spend the money, and not the actual need. A comparison of the BE for health in this year's Budget with the RE of last year suggests that there was an increase of nearly 12%, which is an erroneous estimate of what the programme will

A hospital in Alluri Sitarama Raju district, Andhra SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

actually get as a raise.

By comparing only the BEs of 2023-24 and 2025-25, we note an increase of only 1.98% for the overall Health Ministry budget, 1.16% for the National Health Mission (NHM), and 1.4% for PMJAY. Given the need to expand coverage and enhance the impact of these two flagship programmes of Ayushman Bharat, these increases are disappointingly modest. Many of our national programmes are steered by NHM, which is also responsible for strengthening rural and urban primary care as well as the district hospitals. Apart from the need to make child immunisation universal, the danger of tuberculosis (for which India has set an aspirational elimination date of 2025) and the rapidly rising rates of non-communicable diseases require a better resourced and structurally strengthened NHM.

The goal of having every Indian protected by universal health coverage (our target for 2030) cannot be realised if even the government-funded PMJAY programme is unable to become more inclusive. The recent announcement that it will be extended to cover all elderly persons appears untenable if the programme has a minimal

The goal of having every Indian protected by universal health coverage cannot be realised if even PMJAY is unable to become more inclusive

budgetary increase.

A missed opportunity

While an increase in new medical colleges was mentioned, the need to invest in building a large multi-layered, multi-skilled workforce was not acknowledged. The energetic thrust for employment generation and skill-building must recognise that the health sector represents an area of great need and opportunity, especially for young persons.

It is laudable that customs duties have been waived on three anti-cancer drugs. Price controls are also needed for many other drugs. Pooled procurement, with monopsonic power of price negotiation, can markedly reduce the prices of drugs procured not only by public sector institutions, but also by private healthcare institutions which are accredited to government-funded health insurance schemes. The Budget missed an opportunity to establish such mechanisms.

Investment in climate-resilient agriculture is a welcome budgetary commitment, at a juncture where the quantity and quality of staple crops are likely to be severely affected by global warming. Diversification of agriculture to climate-resilient crops will not only provide nutrition security, but will also be climate smart in reducing the use of water, pesticide, energy and release of greenhouse gases.

The government's focus is on ease of paying taxes

Chandrajit Banerjee

Director General, CII

While providing primacy to growth with inclusion, the Budget attempts to infuse a new momentum to the economy and strengthen India's resilient ecosystem so that the country emerges as a growth engine of the world.

An overarching theme

An important focus of the Budget is simplification and rationalisation of the tax structure. The document has spelled out the contours to achieve this, while trying to minimise disputes and expand the tax net. 'Ease of doing business' is an overarching theme behind the Budget tax proposals.

In the interest of moving towards a common understanding on the OECD BEPS (Base Erosion and Profit Shifting) Action Plan, the government has withdrawn the equalisation levy of 2% on e-commerce transactions. This demonstrates the government's participation in the initiative to create an international framework to combat tax avoidance. The proposals to expand the scope of safe harbour rules, streamline transfer pricing assessment procedure, and reduce the corporate tax rate on foreign companies from 40% to 35%, as suggested by CII, are expected to promote ease of international taxation, improve investor sentiment, and further attract foreign investments in the economy.

The angel tax has outlived its utility and has rightly been abolished. This move will ensure the orderly growth of the Indian startup ecosystem, resolve the problem of dip in funding, and give confidence to investors and entrepreneurs to invest and build from India, as suggested by CII to the government before the Budget.

Gold jewellery at a shop in Kolkata. AFP

CII has been advocating the rationalisation and simplification of the Withholding Tax regime under the Income Tax Act. Decriminalisation of some TDS (tax deducted at source) offences; the SOPs (standard operating procedures) and compounding guidelines for TDS defaults; and rejig in the existing TDS rates under certain categories are welcome moves in this direction, thereby enhancing ease of doing business.

The changes in the capital gains tax regime have been brought in the interest of rationalisation. So far as the removal of indexation benefit in the calculation of long-term capital gains tax is concerned, industry would look forward to seeing this move help the agenda of tax certainty and simplification.

Raising the standard deduction and increasing the tax slabs under the new regime, while increasing the deduction for family pension and the new pension scheme are positive steps towards providing tax relief to middle-class individuals, thereby pushing consumption and demand in the economy.

As a push towards the government's agenda for simplification and rationalisation, the new scheme of block assessment for search cases and reducing the time limit for which reassessment can be done are pertinent. The proposal to introduce the 'Vivad se Vishwas Scheme, 2024' for settlement of pending appeals would go a long way in reducing litigation and releasing amounts stuck under tax disputes. Digitisation of major taxpayer services is a welcome move, in light of the increased need for digitisation and ease of doing business.

'Ease of doing business' is the overarching theme behind the tax proposals in the Budget

Customs duty rates

On the customs front, the government continues to focus on promoting domestic manufacturing and helping India get onto the global value chain, thereby boosting exports. Continuation of rationalisation of customs duty rates and simplification of compliance would enhance ease of doing business, removal of duty inversion, and reduction of disputes.

CII applauds the government for accepting industry's call for waiver of interest and penalty on late payment of GST (Goods and Services Tax) and exclusion of cash balance lying in the cash register of the taxpayers for calculation of interest.

The Budget ticks all the boxes for boosting competitiveness, growth, and promoting tax reforms. Overall, the Budget has delivered beyond expectations, while keeping an eye on much-warranted realism.

A big step towards the transformation of various sectors

Suneeta Reddy

Managing Director, Apollo Hospitals Group

The 2024-25 Budget is a forward-thinking proposal with several commendable initiatives aimed at driving India's economic growth and social progress.

Against the backdrop of 8% GDP growth in FY24, the Budget allocated ₹1.48 lakh crore towards job creation, employment and skilling. While the focus of earlier Budgets was on manufacturing, it is heartening to see that skilling took centre stage this time. This shows a decisive step towards creating an economy that is built strongly around the service sector.

The past success of strong services and the highly successful Global Capability Centres have shown that the service sector can not only drive GDP growth, but also elevate per capita income. Importantly, it can enhance employees' health and well being.

The Budget also paved the way for India's energy transformation. It focused on a range of initiatives – from solar panel manufacturing and installation to a strong push for nuclear energy. As it allocates ₹89,287 crore towards crucial sectors, this Budget represents a significant step towards the transformation of various sectors, and thereby towards the creation of an inclusive and dynamic economy.

Accessibility and affordability

We applaud the government's decision to exempt certain goods from customs duty. Three life-saving cancer medications have been exempted from customs duty. This will make essential treatments and technologies more accessible and affordable. It will greatly aid the patient and reduce for them the

An X-ray. GETTY IMAGES

barrier of cost in accessing time-bound, life-saving solutions.

Customs duty has also been exempted for components of X-ray tubes and digital detectors for advanced medical equipment. This move is expected to make these technologies more affordable and accessible, while also enhancing domestic capabilities and keeping pace with global advancements. The emphasis on aligning customs duty with domestic capacity addition under the phased manufacturing programme will further create a more conducive environment for startups, fostering growth and innovation.

The Budget introduced a framework with nine priorities focusing on leveraging advanced technology and fostering collaboration between the government and private sector to promote growth and innovation. A crucial element of these reforms is the incorporation of state-of-the-art technology and the creation of databases to enhance efficiency and accessibility. By staying current with technological developments, these measures are poised to bring substantial benefits to providers and consumers alike. Effective collaboration between private organisations will be essential for realising the full potential of these reforms. India spends just 0.7% of its GDP on research. The private sector needs to see that as a huge space and collaborate with the government to co-create the future.

Internships and research are important to develop a highly skilled workforce

Women's participation

According to a report by McKinsey, India can increase its 2025 GDP, estimated at $4.83 trillion, by 16%-60% simply by enabling women to participate in the economy on par with men. The government's focus this Budget on boosting women's participation in the workforce with targeted initiatives such as hostels, creches, and skilling programmes is an encouraging and right step in that direction.

The focus on skilling is particularly noteworthy. Internships and research are important to develop a highly skilled workforce. By fostering a culture of continuous learning and hands-on experience, the Budget aims to bridge the gap between academic learning and practical application.

This Budget reflects the government's commitment towards building a healthier and stronger economy. By prioritising our demographic dividend, encouraging public-private partnerships, and investing in research and development, the government is laying the foundation for sustainable economic growth.

Prioritising inclusivity and fiscal prudence

Subhrakant Panda

Immediate Past President, FICCI

There was a lot of anticipation before this Budget. As the first major public policy announcement of the new government, it was expected that the Budget would lay down a plan of action for the following five years of the government's approach towards the larger national vision of Viksit Bharat@2047. Further, while the economy is performing well, there were admittedly a few areas that merited attention, employment being the foremost.

The Finance Minister announced that the Budget would focus on employment, skilling, MSMEs, and the middle class. With the nine priority areas that followed, she articulated the economic policy framework through which the government wishes to bring in the transformation that would accelerate the journey towards Viksit Bharat@2047. By addressing the near-term challenges while keeping an eye on the long term, the government has ensured that this Budget is growth-oriented, inclusive, and will create opportunities for all sections.

Areas of focus

The first is the focus on agriculture. The world over, the impact of climate change is seen the most in the farm sector. With rise in inflation of agri-products being linked to adverse climate events, it was pertinent that India double up efforts on developing climate-resilient seed varieties. The Budget brings in this focus with a comprehensive review of agri-research set up in the country to increase productivity and introduce climate-resilient seed varieties. Additionally, national missions for pulses and oilseeds will be strengthened and greater impetus would be given to set up large-scale clusters for vegetable production near major consumption centres. These steps would help in building self-reliance, bring in stability in the incomes of farmers, and also benefit consumers by arresting the occasional price spikes due to import dependence and fragmented supply chains domestically.

The second is the priority ac-

National missions for pulses and oilseeds are to be strengthened THEE HINDU

corded to employment and skilling. The government has announced a comprehensive package of three schemes that offer employment-linked incentives. These will boost employment generation both in the manufacturing and services sectors and benefit lakhs of youth.

Additionally, the initiative to set up many more working women hostels in the country and creches for care support in partnership with the private sector will facilitate greater participation of women in the workforce. An increase in female labour force participation rate can be an additional lever for our country's growth, and FICCI had suggested strengthening of the care economy ecosystem in the country in its economic agenda for the new government.

The third is the comprehensive set of measures outlined for the MSME sector. Finance is the lifeblood for any industrial unit, and this is more so for the MSMEs. In a national survey that FICCI undertook last year amongst MSMEs, availability of credit on reasonable terms and without collateral were the keys asks. By announcing a new credit guarantee scheme for MSMEs in the manufacturing sector, guiding public sector banks to develop internal assessment models for credit evaluation of MSMEs basis their digital footprints, and having a mechanism in place that would ensure flow of credit to MSMEs even during periods of stress will provide a lot of comfort to MSME units. FICCI is of the view that with these changes, underwriting models will improve and the cost of credit to MSMEs will come down. Another notable inclusion, which is also a FICCI suggestion, was the lowering of annual turnover threshold for registration on TreDS platform from ₹500 crore to ₹250 crore.

The Budget shows the government's approach towards the larger national vision of Viksit Bharat@2047

The fourth area includes proposals that focus on sustainability. Promotion of small modular reactors for nuclear energy, continuous support to the national roof top solar programme, dedicated projects for water supply, sewage treatment and solid waste management in large cities are all welcome measures. Additionally, the setting up of a Critical Minerals Mission will ensure that we are able to access with certainty these minerals which are important for meeting our sustainability goals.

The fifth is the partnership with state to broaden and deepen factor market reforms. FICCI has ardently advocated the need to work closely with States for ushering in reforms in areas like land, labour, and power. These have a bearing on the overall cost of production in the country and we are encouraged by the government's indication to pursue the next generation reforms with State governments as partners for promoting overall national development.

Deftness on fiscal side

Finally, the government needs to be congratulated for the deftness displayed on the fiscal side. The downward revision in projected fiscal deficit for 2024-25 to 4.9% from 5.1% announced in the Interim Budget reflects the government's commitment to fiscal consoli. This will bode well for India's external ratings.

The Budget has articulated a clear vision and identified priorities which will be the foundation for India's continued growth and development. The focus must now shift to implementation.

From Page One

Opposition slams Budget as 'unfair'

Later in the afternoon, initiating the debate, former Finance Minister and Rajya Sabha MP P. Chidambaram criticised the special treatment to Andhra Pradesh and Bihar in the Budget. "I don't grudge at all that you are giving relief to Andhra Pradesh or Bihar, but what about the other States? We are a federal country. This is the death knell of federalism if you pick and choose among States. You are the Union of India, you are the Union government, you are the government of all the States. You cannot pick and choose one State and deny relief to another State," Mr. Chidambaram said.

While unemployment is the biggest challenge for the government, Mr. Chidambaram said that the government's latest employment-linked scheme did not instil confidence and will be another election *jumla* (insincere promise).

On inflation, he said the Finance Minister had dismissed the subject in 10 words. "Is inflation such a trivial subject?" Mr. Chidambaram asked, citing data from the government on inflation. He said the bank rate set by the Reserve Bank of India is a good measure to know where inflation is moving, and added that the Centre was unable to reach the target of 4% inflation in the last four years.

"I think what the Chief Economic Adviser said in the Economic Survey [on inflation] is injury, and the honourable Finance Minister dismissing the subject in 10 words is adding insult to injury," he said.

In the Lok Sabha, too, the Opposition levelled a similar charge. Initiating the debate in the Lok Sabha, Congress MP Kumari Selja termed the budget a collection of "*jumlas*", cautioning NDA members Nitish Kumar and N. Chandrababu Naidu that they, "may celebrate today for getting a large share" but time could change.

Earlier in the day, before the two Houses sat down for business, the Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) bloc members staged a protest.

UPSC set to revamp examination system

The UPSC will provide the data and images submitted by applicants during the online registration process to the service provider for the Aadhar-based fingerprint authentication and facial recognition systems to verify candidates on the day of the exam. To rule out attempts at impersonation, fingerprint scanners and facial recognition devices will be used at the examination centres, it said.

The Commission has proposed a real-time attendance monitoring system along with GPS coordinates to ensure that enrolment is done during the stipulated shift. "QR code on the Admit Card [containing roll number of the candidate] should be scanned to auto-fetch the candidate's details from Application Database [provided by UPSC]. In case QR code on Admit Card is not scannable, then manual entry of candidate's roll number from Admit Card has to be done," the UPSC said.

The Commission said it has decided to "implement CCTV/video surveillance with recording and live broadcast system to monitor various activities of the candidates and other persons deployed to conduct the Commission's Examinations at the various centres and venues across the country under a secure environment."

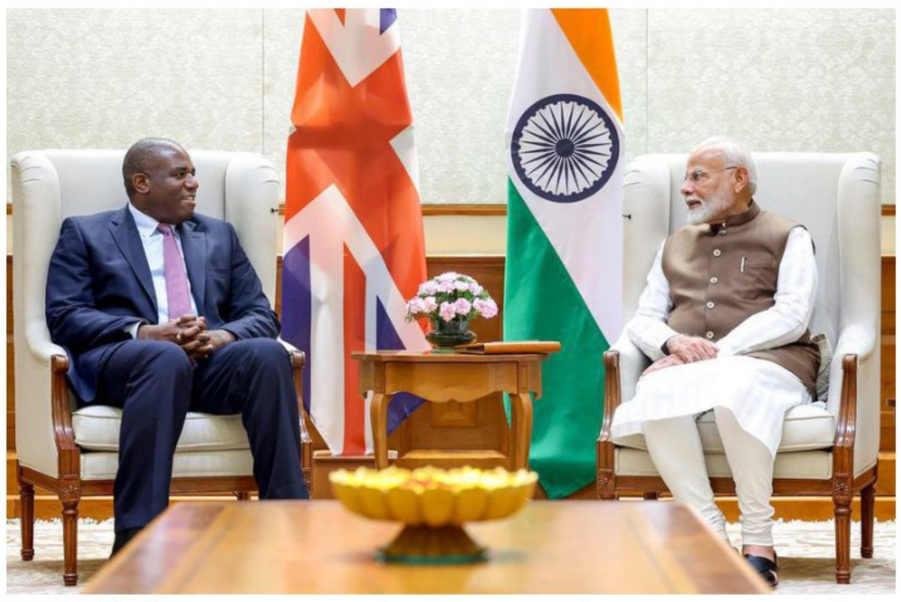
The service provider will also have to make arrangements for remote live viewing of the CCTV footage at the UPSC's own control room.

The Commission conducts 14 examinations every year, including the Civil Services Examination (CSE) and a number of recruitment tests and interviews for induction to Group 'A' and Group 'B' posts of the Government of India.

India committed to FTA with the U.K., says Modi

British Foreign Secretary David Lammy refers to 'unique living bridge' between the two countries, and says they are working together on climate action and creating opportunities for businesses

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI



Strengthening ties: Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a meeting with U.K. Foreign Secretary David Lammy, in New Delhi on Wednesday. ANI/@NARENDRAMODI/X

India is committed to concluding a Free Trade Agreement with the United Kingdom, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday, after meeting the visiting Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs David Lammy – the highest ranking official from the United Kingdom to visit India since the Labour government won a landslide victory in the recent election.

"[I] appreciate the priority accorded by PM Keir Starmer to broaden and deepen the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. Remain committed to elevating the ties. Welcome the bilateral Technology Security Initiative and the desire to conclude a mutually beneficial FTA," Mr. Modi said.

Mr. Lammy was hosted by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar for a round of talks where the two sides exchanged ideas on a wide range of issues. Mr. Jaishankar said the two sides should cooperate on "global matters on global platforms", indicating that India is seeking collaboration with the U.K. to deal with globally relevant issues like climate action.

"We are both countries which have a big global presence in different ways. So I think it's also important India and the U.K. work together on global issues and in global platforms," said Mr. Jaishankar.

After meeting Mr. Modi, Mr. Lammy referred to the "unique living bridge" that connects India with the United Kingdom and said the two sides are building on "climate action while creating opportunities for British and Indian businesses". India and the U.K. have been discussing the FTA for several years now and have been caught up in a protracted negotiation.

"I am travelling to India in my first month as Foreign Secretary because resetting our relationship with the Global South is a key part of how this government will reconnect Britain for our security and prosperity at home," Mr. Lammy had said in a statement ahead of his departure, calling India the "emerging superpower of the 21st century", one of the fastest growing economies, with the world's largest population.

INBRIEF

Bihar Assembly passes Bill to curb paper leaks in exams

The Bihar Assembly on Wednesday passed a Bill aimed to curb the curse of questions paper leak and other malpractices in government recruitment examination in the State. The Bihar Public Examinations (PE) (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024, was tabled by Parliamentary Affairs Minister Vijay Kumar Chaudhary and passed with voice vote. The Bill has the provision of imprisonment term of three to five years and fine of ₹10 lakh. If a service provider whether a government entity or a private agency engages in malpractices, it will face a fine of ₹1 crore and four year termination of it services.

Bengal Assembly passes resolution to replace NEET

The West Bengal Assembly on Wednesday passed a resolution urging the Government of West Bengal to conduct the State-based joint entrance examination for admission of students to medical colleges for ensuring a robust public health care system across the State. The resolution passed under Rule 169, tabled by Minister Sobhandeb Chattopadhyay, stated that the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA) without any consultation with the State government is not desired and expected in a federal and democratic country like India. It criticised the NTA for its perceived failure to conduct a fair examination.

BJP demands apology from Rahul after SC's order on NEET-UG

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Ravi Shankar Prasad

A day after the Supreme Court dismissed pleas seeking cancellation and re-test of the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test-Undergraduate) (NEET-UG), holding that there was no evidence of a "systemic breach" of the sanctity of the exam, the BJP demanded an apology from Congress leader and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi.

Lok Sabha member and former Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad at a press conference on Wednesday said that the Opposition, especially Mr. Gandhi, had tried to defame India's examination globally with his strong words. "His choice of words is violative of Parliament's dignity and the dignity of the office of the Leader of the Opposition," Mr. Prasad said.

Defending the government's actions on the NEET row, Mr. Prasad said that the probe in the matter had been handed over to the CBI.

"Mr. Gandhi was using words like 'fraud' to attack the entire examination and now the court has made it clear that there was no systemic breach in the sanctity of the test," Mr. Prasad said. "Will Rahul Gandhi apologise?" he asked.

A half-burnt paper scrap proves vital clue for CBI probe into NEET-UG leak

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

A half-burnt scrap of a printout from a leaked NEET-UG question paper, with its unique bar code intact, helped to unravel the conspiracy and *modus operandi* of a gang whose leader is yet to be caught.

The story behind the leak of the medical entrance examination paper was narrated by the CBI Additional Director A.Y.V. Krishna in the Supreme Court before a three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud during a full-day hearing on Tuesday.

According to the 1995-batch IPS officer, the gang started their work three months ahead of NEET. Their members started contacting parents of candidates and authorities of "vulnerable" exam centres who would not mind giving them access to the sealed question papers in return for a tidy sum.

Mr. Krishna said that the gang hit the jackpot with the Oasis School at Hazaribagh in Jharkhand. On May 5, once the papers were stored in the examination 'control room' at the school, one of the gang member, identified as 'Pankaj', sneaked in.

It took Pankaj exactly one hour and 20 minutes to pry open the trunk, unseal the plastic wraps and click pictures of the question paper. It was then resealed in its plastic wrap using a cigarette lighter and placed back. The photographs were sent to a gang member waiting with eight 'problem solvers' and 'beneficiary' students.

Hard copies of the solved sheets were then given to the students to memorise before they left for their exam centres. Students had been divided into groups in Patna and Hazaribagh.

The burnt scrap was found on the ground at a high school where the Patna group had converged to memorise the questions and answers. The gang had tried to burn the question papers after the students had left.

However, the unique number on the burnt scrap had led the CBI to the girl student to whom the question paper was actually assigned. "She was genuine. She had noticed the burnt mark on the resealed plastic wrap covering her paper but had kept silent. She later made a statement to us," Mr. Krishna narrated to the court.

Two Russian stealth frigates for Indian Navy launched

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The first of two advanced frigates, which is under-construction by the Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) with technology transfer from Russia for the Indian Navy, was launched into water on Wednesday.

India had contracted four frigates from Russia in October 2016, two of them to be built in Russia and two at the GSL.

"In keeping with maritime tradition, the ship was launched by Rita Sreedharan, to the invocation from *Atharva Veda*, in the presence of P.S. Sreedharan Pillai, Governor of Goa. The ship has been named *Triput*, after the mighty arrow, representing the indomitable spirit of Indian Navy and its ability to strike far and deep," the Navy said in a statement.

No progress on UN Security Council expansion, say former Ambassadors

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

> Since 2023, there has only been movement in making the Inter-Governmental Negotiations process on UN reforms transparent
>
> **RUCHIRA KHAMBOJ**
> Former Indian Ambassador to UN

Despite consistent efforts by India and other countries, the move for United Nations Security Council (UNSC) reform and expansion has made "no progress" so far, conceded two former Indian Ambassadors to the United Nations, stressing that India must, however, continue to push its demand for inclusion in the top global decision-making body.

The lack of progress has been the subject of considerable frustration ahead of this year's Summit of the Future at the UN (September 22-23) that is expected to bring in more than 150 world leaders to discuss plans to "reboot" the UN, with India and its partners in the G-4 (Brazil, Germany and Japan), all of whom claim a permanent seat at the UNSC, lashing out in recent statements about the proposed "Pact of the Future" that will be released.

"The short answer to whether there is progress in concrete terms, is no," said India's former Permanent Representative to the UN Ruchira Khamboj (2022-2024), who retired at the end of June, at a seminar organised at the India International Centre (IIC) in Delhi. She added that since 2023, there has only been movement in making the Inter-Governmental Negotiations (IGN) process on UN reforms more transparent.

"You now have a live broadcast of the Inter-Governmental Negotiations. This wasn't the case until last year, and there's also a digital repository where you can put your proposals, and India's proposals are very much there on expansion and reforms on their website, but in terms of real progress, let's be very honest... the answer is no," Ms. Khamboj said.

Last week, India's Acting Permanent Representative R. Ravindra delivered a sharp address during an open debate at the UNSC, blaming the failure of the multilateral system on the "1945-vintage binary outlook reflected clearly in the composition of the Security Council", referring to the fact that the five permanent members of the Security Council, or P5, are still those who are considered "victors" of the Second World War.

"Disillusionment with the existing multilateral system has led member states to consider various alternatives," Mr. Ravindra said.

Facets of governance and the preparatory journey towards IAS

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Unacademy and *The Hindu* jointly held a two-day summit for civil services aspirants during the weekend in which over 30,000 aspirants participated. The speakers touched up on many aspects of governance and what UPSC aspirants should expect in their preparatory journey.

The summit had former cricketer and Indian coach V.V.S. Laxman, actor Shefali Shah, Congress leader and MP Jairam Ramesh, Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Jairam Gadkari, former Deputy Chief Minister of Rajasthan and All India Congress Committee general secretary Sachin Pilot, political activist and academic Yogendra Yadav, Indian Olympic medallist Mary Kom, Additional Director-General of Police, Law and Order, Telangana, Mahesh Muralidhar Bhagwat; Diplomatic Affairs Editor of *The Hindu* Suhasini Haidar, and senior IAS officer in Tamil Nadu J. Radhakrishnan.

Positive mindset

Ms. Shah spoke about her film career and the importance of believing in oneself.

Mr. Laxman engaged the participants in an interactive session urging candidates to have a positive mindset.

Mr. Ramesh dwelt on the environmental challenges in India that are impacting the health of people. "COVID-19 was also a reflection of imbalance and loss of habitat and biodiversity that increased the vulnerability of humanity."

Speaking on "What will India's infrastructure look like in 2030?", Mr. Gadkari said the country was undergoing a massive transformation, and pointed out that a pilot project with electric vehicles for public transport was under way in Nagpur.

Dr. Radhakrishnan spoke about the role of an IAS officer and the challenges in disaster management and public policy.

Ms. Kom spoke of her boxing journey and gave tips on tackling stress.

Mr. Bhagwat, a police officer, explained the various career paths through UPSC exam and the responsibility of Indian youth. He offered tips on preparation; time management and challenges students may face while preparing for the career.

Mr. Yadav spoke about the idea of India, the challenges and the way forward. Mr. Pilot's talk was on Indian democracy in the 21st century with the challenges and opportunities in the country.

Ms. Haidar said the country's cultural exports such as yoga and Bollywood, along with its educational influence and proactive diplomatic engagements, continued to enhance its soft power.

SC suggests forming panel to hold talks with farmers

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday suggested the constitution of a "neutral" panel to resolve the "trust deficit" between agitating farmers and the Union government that had led to months of a tense stand-off and blockades on the Shambhu barrier linking Punjab and Haryana.

The Bench asked Mr. Mehta and the Advocate-General of Punjab to get instructions from the two State governments within a week on a proposal to constitute an independent committee to reach out to the agitating farmers, the Union of India, the State governments and other stakeholders.

The case was posted for August 2. The hearing was based on an appeal filed by the Haryana government against a Punjab and Haryana High Court direction to remove the blockades.

Farmers to intensify protests, seek Rahul's help to get statutory MSP

'Our manifesto promised a legal guarantee for MSP, we will put pressure on government to ensure that farmers get their right,' says Leader of the Opposition; the SKM says the Union Budget has paved the way for corporatisation of agriculture

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A day after the presentation of the Union Budget, various farmers' organisations on Wednesday decided to step up their protests against the Narendra Modi government.

While the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) decided to burn the copies of the Budget to mark their protests, a splinter group of it met Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and urged him to support their demand for statutory minimum support price (MSP).

Mr. Gandhi told the delegation that he would raise its demands in Parliament.

The delegation including Jagjeet Singh Dallewal, Sarvan Singh Panther, Abhimanyu, Nallamala Venkateswar Rao, Tejvir Singh and others met Mr. Gandhi and other senior MPs of the Congress. "Our manifesto promised a legal guarantee for MSP. We have done a full assessment and it is feasible. We had a meeting and it was decided that we will have a discussion with INDIA bloc leaders and will try and put pressure on the government to ensure that the farmers get a legal guarantee for MSP," Mr. Gandhi told presspersons. He added later that a legal guarantee for the MSP is the right of farmers. Mr. Dallewal said INDIA bloc had promised all support for the protests and demands.

Unfair treatment: Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, along with farmer leaders, speaks to the media at Parliament House on Wednesday. PTI

Congress general secretary K.C. Venugopal, former Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi, Punjab Congress chief Amrinder Singh Raja Warring, Congress leaders Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa, Gurjeet Singh Aujla, Dharamvir Gandhi, Amar Singh, Deepender Singh Hooda and Jai Prakash were present in the meeting.

"In our meeting with farm union leaders, we discussed the urgent need for a legal MSP guarantee, justice for protesting farmers who suffered at the hands of the Haryana government, and various other issues concerning the farmers today," Mr. Venugopal said on X.

Leaders of the SKM told reporters in a press conference that the Union Budget is for corporatisation of agriculture.

Highlight raw deal to States not ruled by NDA, says Rahul

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday told 20 Congress MPs, who are slated to speak during the debate on the Union Budget, to ensure they highlighted the raw deal meted out to the States ruled by parties outside the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), rather than lament the heavy allocations for Andhra Pradesh and Bihar.

This was the first such meeting Mr. Gandhi had with his colleagues after taking over as the Leader of the Opposition in the Lower House.

In a 10-minute short chat, according to sources, Mr. Gandhi asked them to maintain a careful balance between regional concerns and the party's national line.

This Budget is a "*kursi bachao* (save the chair)" exercise, and the speeches must reflect that, Mr. Gandhi is learnt to have told the members.

"What Andhra Pradesh or Bihar got is not your issue, what the other States were deprived of, is the real problem. We are a national party and must behave like one," he reportedly told the members.

Budget sops used as an insurance for fragile coalition: Opposition MPs

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Battle lines appeared drawn in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday over the Union Budget, with the Opposition terming the allocations to the States ruled by National Democratic Alliance (NDA) constituents as an "insurance" to save a fragile coalition under the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and the Treasury benches asserting that the Budget had addressed all sections and regions.

Trinamool Congress MP Abhishek Banerjee said the ruling coalition was so uncertain and fragile that it could implode any time.

He repeatedly used the phrase "*waqt badal raha hai* (time is changing)" on the Modi government's reduced numbers in the Lok Sabha. The pressures of the coalition were demonstrated by the Budget, he added. "After yesterday, one thing is clear, coalition means appeasement and compensation."

INDIA bloc MPs stage a protest in front of Parliament. ANI

He accused the Modi government of depriving West Bengal and other parts of the country of various benefits, including MGNERGS and housing scheme funds. "Since you have failed to defeat us politically in West Bengal, you are now conspiring against the people of the State," he alleged.

Dayanidhi Maran of the DMK launched a scathing attack on the government. "Lakhs of crores of public money were spent to promote 'Modi *ka* guarantee' before the Lok Sabha polls. After the election, 'Modi *ka* guarantee' is replaced with 'Modi *ka* insurance'. Premium is being paid by the people to ensure he continues as PM," he said.

Biplab Deb, BJP MP from Tripura, said the NDA would remain in government till 2047 and "will take India to newer heights".

He said the interests of all States and all sections had been taken care of. An additional ₹4.82 lakh crore share has been allocated for the States, he added. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi's guarantee is still there, it is there in the Budget also," he said.

Mr. Deb also hit out at the Congress and other Opposition parties for alleging that the Constitution is under threat.

Economist C.T. Kurien no more; tributes pour in

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

C.T. Kurien, distinguished economist and former Professor at Madras Christian College, is no more. He died from age-related ailments at 11 p.m. on Tuesday. He was 93.

Professor Kurien received a Master's degree in economics from Madras Christian College in 1953. He had pursued economics as major field of study in college with the hope that through its study, he would be able to understand the causes of poverty and contribute to its eradication. But he was disappointed with mainstream economics as there was no serious discussion on poverty and decided to pursue higher studies in the discipline. He secured a Ph.D. from Stanford University (1958-1963) on the topic "Factor market structure and technological characteristics of an underdeveloped country: an Indian case study".

Professor Kurien was a Visiting Fellow at Yale University in 1968-69. He served as a Professor at Madras Christian College between 1962 and 1978, and at the Madras Institute of Development Studies from 1978 to 1991, where he also served as Director from 1978 to 1988.

He also had stints as a National Fellow at the University Grants Commission and the Indian Council of Social Science Research. He served as president of Indian Economic Association in 2000.

C.T. Kurien

He authored 15 books on various aspects of economics and approached economics from the viewpoint of fighting poverty. "From the very early days in my life, I was aware of the grim poverty that surrounded my rather comfortable life," Professor Kurien said in an interview published in *The Hindu* on July 31, 2021.

"Poverty has been the dominant theme in my writings. I knew it was wrong to proceed on the assumption that as growth takes place, poverty would be automatically eradicated," he said.

N. Ram, Director of The Hindu Publishing Group and former Editor-in-Chief of *The Hindu*, described him as an outstanding scholar, a beloved teacher, and a progressive public intellectual who always spoke out on issues that matter.

Historian and writer A.R. Venkatachalapathy lauded Professor Kurien as an institution builder.

Madras Christian College paid rich tributes to him. The college lost one of its most powerful advocates for poverty eradication through his brilliant work in economics, a statement said.

"His tenure in various administrative responsibilities in MCC bore his stamp of originality and inclusive leadership," it added.

U. Sankar, former Director of Madras School of Economics, remembered him as "a very good scholar, original-minded who cannot accept conventional economics and questions everything".

J. Jayaranjan, Vice-Chairman of the Tamil Nadu State Planning Commission, who was his last doctoral student, remembers his Professor as a patient man.

"He was a man of great values. He will make you conceive the position and write it out. He made me write the introduction to my thesis 20 times. On the day of the viva, he said, 'Now you will know why I made you write 20 times,'" he recalled.

RSS leader asks Amit Malviya not to troll people

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Ratan Sharda, an RSS leader, on Wednesday came down heavily on Amit Malviya, the head of the Bharatiya Janata Party's IT cell, for trolling social media users who criticised the Union Budget.

Terming it a "serious problem", Mr. Sharda, who is also a columnist in the RSS's English mouthpiece *Organiser*, said the IT cell should instead focus on simplifying the government's schemes for citizens.

In a post on X, Mr. Malviya flayed those complaining about the Budget proposal to eliminate indexation on long-term capital gains from property sales. "Everyone is an indexation specialist tonight," Mr. Malviya wrote in a post which he deleted later.

"This attitude of BJP IT Cell is a serious problem. Instead of coming up with simplified communication about good points of #Budget2024, he ends up trolling citizens. Answer their fear, don't insult them dear Amit Malviya," Mr. Sharda wrote.

The RSS maintained that Mr. Sharda's articles expressed his personal opinion and did not reflect the views of the Sangh.

INBRIEF

Opposition should apologise to people of A.P., Bihar: BJP

The Bharatiya Janata Party on Wednesday said the Congress-led Opposition should apologise to the people of Bihar and Andhra Pradesh for 'mocking' the Budget announcements made for the two States. BJP leader G.V.L. Narasimha Rao said the Opposition resorted to "immature" and "negative" statements, whereas the Budget was welcomed by "one and all". Saying that "balanced development" as a primary objective had been the hallmark of all the Budgets presented in the past 10 years of the NDA government, Mr. Rao said special focus was being given to certain States, particularly in the eastern region, in order to achieve the goal.

Gangopadhyay, Gogoi engage in fiery exchange over Godse

A former judge of the Calcutta High Court and BJP MP from West Bengal, Abhijit Gangopadhyay, got into a fiery exchange with Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi during his maiden speech on the Union Budget, with some words uttered by him expunged from the record later. The exchange took place when Mr. Gangopadhyay was being urged to conclude his speech, at which he told the restive Opposition benches that he had not asked them to stay to hear him out. At this, Mr. Gogoi responded asking Mr. Gangopadhyay about his views on Godse. He retorted with a pejorative reference to Mr. Gogoi, and added that Mr. Gogoi "knew neither about Gandhi nor Godse".

Congress MP Praniti Shinde raises issue of caste census

Congress MP Praniti Shinde on Wednesday made a strong case for a caste census, and asked the Union government to negotiate with activist Manoj Jarange-Patil to find a solution to the Maratha-Dhangar reservation issue at the earliest in Maharashtra. Ms. Shinde, the MP for Solapur in Maharashtra, was speaking during Zero Hour in the Lok Sabha. She said Mr. Jarange-Patil had been on a fast and the Dhangar community wanted to be included in the Scheduled Tribes (ST) category. "The government is adding to the existing tensions in Maharashtra. The BJP is in government in Maharashtra and at the Centre. Why can't there be a negotiation to find a solution to it?" she said.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF WIND ENERGY
(An Autonomous R&D Institution under Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India)
Velachery-Tambaram High Road, Pallikaranai, Chennai - 600100, Tamil Nadu, INDIA. **Tel: +91-44-22463982/83/84**

Walk-in-interview for PROJECT ENGINEER Post (On Contract)

Advt No. 02/2024
National Institute of Wind Energy (NIWE) is the technical arm of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Govt. of India established to serve as a technical focal point for orderly development of Wind Power deployment. This Institute proposes to recruit four (4) posts of **Project Engineer on contract basis.**
Details of essential qualification, experience, age limit, other terms & conditions are available in the website: **https://niwe.res.in/careers.php**
Interested candidates are requested to attend **Walk-in-Interview at 09:00 a.m. on 29.07.2024** at National Institute of Wind Energy (NIWE). Candidates reporting later than 10.30 a.m. will not be considered for Interview.
Additional Director (Finance & Administration)

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice
Tender No : SE/PHC/MPM/34-38,40,44/2024-25. **Jala Jeevan Mission Malappuram District.** 37MLD WTP, 39LL, 20LL OHSR in Tripangode, Mangalam, Purathur, Talakad, Vettam Panchayats, Cherimundam, Urakam Balance FHTC, Munniyur, Chelembra, Thenipalum Vallikunu, Karulai, Amarambalam, Moothedam, Chokkad Panchayats Electro Mechanical Work and Pumping Main Pump Sets Transformer Supply Installation, Balance Supply Pipeline Installation and related Works. **EMD :** Rs. 100000-500000, **Tender fee :** Rs. 8270-16540, **Last Date for submitting Tender :** 01-08-2024 03:00:pm, **Phone :** 04832974871
Website : www.kwa.kerala.gov.in, www.etenders.kerala.gov.in
KWA-JB-GL-6-258-2024-25
Superintending Engineer
PH Circle, Malappuram

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
CMG, SDSC - SHAR SRIHARIKOTA - 524124
Brief E-TENDER NOTICE : CORRIGENDUM-B
No:SHAR:CMG:CIVIL:MAINT:E-PT-02(B)/24-25 Dt:24.07.2024
Kindly refer to E-Public Tender-02/24-25 dt 10.06.24 **"Structural repairs works at SMPC Unit-II, SDSC SHAR" (T/C-24-007, Est. cost ₹ 14.63 Lakhs). Sale period extended up to 12.08.2024**. Interested tenderers may visit www.isro.gov.in or www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO for details.
Sd/- GROUP HEAD, CMG/SDSC SHAR

APPOINTMENT

RESERVE BANK OF INDIA SERVICES BOARD, MUMBAI
www.rbi.org.in
Advt. No. 01/ 2024-25

Applications are invited for lateral recruitment to the following post on regular basis:

OFFLINE APPLICATION PROCESS:

Sr. No.	Post	Vacancy
1	**Chief Archivist in Grade 'D' in the Reserve Bank of India Archives**	**01**

For all other details such as age, qualification, selection procedure, remuneration, mode of application and other instructions, please refer to the detailed advertisement published on **July 22, 2024** on the Bank's website (www.rbi.org.in) and in the Employment News/Rozgar Samachar issue dated July 27, 2024/subsequent issue.

IMPORTANT DATE:

Last date for receipt of application: Completed application should reach the Board's Office on or before **6.00 PM on August 12, 2024.**

NOTE: Corrigendum, if any, issued on the above advertisement will be published only on the Bank's website (www.rbi.org.in). (Hindi version of this advertisement will be available in Dainik Jagran, Dainik Bhaskar and Navbharat Times)

BANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(Wholly Owned by Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
CIN - U04010KA2002SGC030438
Brief Tender Notification
(Through KPP Portal)

BESCOM invites tenders through KPP Portal from eligible Bidders for **"Replacement of existing HT/LT Overhead lines passing through the Schools/Colleges/Hostels premises and passing by the side of compound walls and in other hazardous locations by Covered Conductor/LT AB Cable in Ramanagara Division and Kanakapura Division, BESCOM Jurisdiction for a period of one year on Total Turnkey Percentage Quoting Basis."**

Sl. No.	Description	Enquiry Nos.
1	Ramanagara Division BESCOM Jurisdiction	BESCOM/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT173
2	Kanakapura Division BESCOM Jurisdiction	BESCOM/2024-25/EL/WORK_INDENT174

Bid Documents available : 26.07.2024. **Last date for Bid Submission :** 26.08.2024 15:00 Hrs. **Opening of Bid Document :** 27.08.2024, 15:15 Hrs.
The Tenders can be obtained through KPP portal web-site **http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** Aspiring Bidders need to register on KPP portal. Further Bidders can take assistance with KPP help desk contact numbers **(+91-8046010000, +91-8068948777) or email at support@eprochelpdesk.com.**
Sd/-
For electricity related complaints call : 1912
Download BESCOM Mithra Mobile APP
General Manager (Ele.,), Procurement, BESCOM,

INBRIEF

DRDO tests Phase-II ballistic missile defence system

The DRDO on Wednesday successfully flight-tested the Phase-II Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) system demonstrating the indigenous capability to defend against ballistic missiles of 5,000-km class. Phase 1 of the BMD, which can intercept ballistic missiles with a range of 2,000 km, has already been deployed. The maiden test of the Phase-II BMD was carried out in November 2022. "The Target Missile was launched from LC-IV Dhamra at 1620 hrs mimicking adversary ballistic missile, which was detected by weapon system radars deployed on land and sea and activated the Air Defence (AD) interceptor system," DRDO said in a statement.

Body of missing naval sailor of *INS Brahmaputra* found

The body of Leading Seaman Sitendra Singh, who went missing after the fire on board *INS Brahmaputra* that also tilted to a side, has been found after intensive diving operations, the Navy said on Wednesday. A fire had erupted on the guided missile frigate on Sunday. After the fire was doused, the ship tilted to the left. "Following the unfortunate incident of *INS Brahmaputra* in Naval Dockyard Mumbai, Adm Dinesh K. Tripathi, Chief of Naval Staff (CNS), visited Mumbai on Tuesday. The body of Sitendra Singh, Leading Seaman, has been found after intensive diving operations," Commander Mehul Karnik, spokesperson of Western Naval Command said.

Right to shelter is a fundamental right, says SC

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday urged a balance to be struck between railway infrastructure development at Haldwani, considered to be the doorway to the hills in Uttarakhand, and the fundamental right to shelter of nearly 50,000 people accused of illegally living on railway land. "They are also human beings," a Bench headed by Justice Surya Kant observed.

The court said while it cannot be ruthless about the fate of these families, its orders cannot also be misinterpreted as a note of encouragement for future encroachments.

The hearing was based on an application filed by the Railways to modify a 2023 top court order staying a Uttarakhand High Court direction to evict these families within a week. It said a flooding Ghaula river has disrupted railway operations in the region. The railway needed more land urgently to lay new tracks.

It asked the State Chief Secretary to meet with the Railway authorities and the Ministry of Urban Affairs to iron out a "fair and equitable" rehabilitation project for the families.

Grasslands in Kutch likely to host cheetahs from Africa

While the Gandhi Sagar sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh is the preferred location for the next lot of imports, Banni in Gujarat is also getting readied to house some of the big cats to land in India

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Banni is a vast grassland in the southern part of Kutch and extends to nearly 3,500 sq.km. VIJAY SONEJI

Some of the next batch of cheetahs being brought in from Africa, as part of the next phase of Project Cheetah, may be sent to a cheetah-breeding and conservation centre being built in the sprawling grasslands of Banni in the Rann of Kutch in Gujarat, senior officials in the Environment Ministry told *The Hindu*.

While the Gandhi Sagar sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh is the preferred location for the next lot of wild cats, with Banni being considered a potential habitat for over a decade, officials say there is a surge in activity to set up basic infrastructure in Banni and get it ready this year.

"The next [lot of] animals will go to Gandhi Sagar. However, the Gujarat government is setting up suitable enclosures in Banni where cheetahs can be bred. If all goes to plan, there is no reason (the site) cannot be readied in the next six months and some animals sent there," an official told *The Hindu*.

Banni is a vast grassland in the southern part of Kutch and extends to nearly 3,500 square kilometres. While that is plenty of space, more than that available in Kuno and Gandhi Sagar, there is barely enough prey to sustain a viable population.

Antelope species such as chinkara and blackbuck – the prey for the cheetah – are present in the Banni landscape but not enough for the big cat. "It will take years for enough prey, and practically this means chital – the main prey for the cheetahs in India – needs to be brought into these grasslands. There isn't an official plan yet but it is a site that is under consideration," the official added.

While the Madhya Pradesh Forest Department is tasked with managing the cheetahs at Kuno in Madhya Pradesh, an expert steering committee gives scientific input on managing the programme. This includes recommending future sites for introducing fresh batches of cheetahs at regular intervals.

Of the 20 adult cheetahs brought to Kuno since September 2022, 13 survive. Additionally there are 13 cubs, making it 26 animals overall. However, the maximum capacity (in terms of available prey) of the Kuno reserve is for 21 adult animals.

The government's estimate is that India will need to import anywhere between 10 and 12 adult cheetahs every year for the next five years to groom a sustainable breeding population. "One attractive aspect of Banni is that there are no leopards. So with enough prey, we can overtime sustain a larger population. But this is a long-term plan," an official said.

In October, all of the cheetahs in Kuno are expected to be released into the wild. Currently, most of them are in the bomas, or large enclosures that are a kilometre wide and long. These animals were brought in after infections and acclimatisation problems led to fatalities. Following the release of all the animals into the wild, preparations for the next batch are expected to begin – again from South Africa and Namibia.

Aadhaar enrolment ID for PAN to be disallowed

N. Ravi Kumar
HYDERABAD

Come October 1, the option of quoting the enrolment ID of the Aadhaar application form at the time of applying for a Permanent Account Number (PAN) or filing return of income will be withdrawn.

It is imperative to discontinue the option since any allotment of PAN against the enrolment ID of the Aadhaar application form may lead to duplication and misuse of PAN, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed in the Budget 2024-25 documents tabled in Parliament on Tuesday.

It is further proposed that every person who has been allotted PAN on the basis of the enrolment ID of the Aadhaar application form should intimate his/her Aadhaar number on or before a notified date to the Income Tax authorities.

The option of quoting the enrolment ID in the application form for allotment of PAN or in the return of income was introduced in 2017. Since then, coverage of Aadhaar has been increasing and encompassed a majority of the population, the Finance Minister said in the documents.

ICMR ready to transfer technology of a 'breakthrough' TB detection system

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has begun work on spreading an affordable, faster and easy-to-use testing technology for detection of tuberculosis.

The council has invited an Expression of Interest from organisations, companies and manufacturers for "transfer of technology" for commercialisation of "a CRISPR Cas-based TB detection system".

Developed by the ICMR Regional Medical Research Centre, Dibrugarh, the technology is touted as the "world's cheapest TB testing system". It can detect the TB bacterium using DNA from saliva at a very low cost. It can identify the bacterium with preliminary symptoms, and test over 1,500 samples within two hours.

Over 1,500 samples can be simultaneously tested within two hours.

"It is so simple that it can be used even in the primary health centre of a village," say researchers at the centre.

TB kills an estimated 4,80,000 Indians every year or over 1,400 patients every day. Additionally, the country has more than a million "missing" TB cases annually, which are not notified. Most remain either undiagnosed, or unaccountably and inadequately diagnosed and treated in the private sector.

A senior Health Ministry official had noted that India's efforts to achieve rapid decline in the burden of TB morbidity and mortality, towards the elimination of the infection by 2025, have plateaued.

He added that there is now a move to rework the protocol to tackle the disease, specifically TB medication and its duration, to reboot the TB-free initiative with zero deaths, disease, and poverty resulting from the disease.

Expert guidance

The ICMR has developed the "CRISPR Cas-based TB detection system" and is lawfully entitled to enter into any form of exclusive or non-exclusive agreements with eligible manufacturing companies through a defined agreement for licensing and commercialisation of the system, which shall be governed by the ICMR IP Policy, it said.

Listing out its role, the council has noted that the Dibrugarh centre will provide expert guidance and technical support for the production of the system in all phases.

"The ICMR through its institutes would provide support and facilitation to conduct the R&D/clinical study of new technology/product in India, in collaboration with the company/institutions in a professional and mutually agreed upon manner and timelines, which will be decided later under the Agreement. It will also provide technical support in development of technology/product and will also facilitate the validation as per the terms & conditions of the agreement. It shall have no financial implications unless otherwise specified," it said.

Centre defends fact-check unit, says right to correct information important

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Defending the formation of a fact-checking unit (FCU), the Union government said in the Bombay High Court on Wednesday that the right to know factually correct information and the right to not be misled were equally important as the right to freedom of speech and expression under Article 19(1)(a).

Stand-up artist Kunal Kamra, the Editors Guild of India, and the Association of Indian Magazines have challenged the constitutionality of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Amendment Rules, 2023 that permit an FCU of the Union government to identify "fake or false or misleading" online content "related to the business of the Central Government" and demand its removal.

The Centre will continue its arguments in the Bombay High Court on Thursday.

Tie-breaker judge Justice A.S. Chandurkar is hearing arguments in the case after a Division Bench of the High Court delivered a split verdict on January 31.

Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, for the Union government, said the FCU would prevent people from false information.

"This approach represents the least restrictive method to counteract fake, false, and misleading information. Private companies and individuals also maintain fact-checking units and the government is similarly justified in providing accurate information to the public. In many instances, the government acts as the adjudicator and beneficiary. However, in this context, my [government's] role is simply to identify and highlight instances of falsehood or misinformation," he said.

The petitioners completed their argument in April, contending that the amendment enables the government to be the "prosecutor, the judge, and in that loose sense, the executioner" of what constitutes the 'truth' online, thereby violating the cardinal principles of natural justice. They also pointed out that the "over-broad and vague" nature of the rules created a "chilling effect" on the freedom of speech and expression guaranteed under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution.

Mr. Mehta said the argument of "chilling effect" was incorrect.

"We (government) are not the final arbiter here. Just like individuals, the government can also intimate. The FCU is a methodical way of doing that. And being a statutory regime, it has consequences. We are not the arbiter. The first arbiter is the intermediary, the final arbiter is a court of competent jurisdiction. The right to be informed correctly is necessarily inherent in my right under Article 21. Because, if somebody's freedom of speech incites violence or threatens public order, it directly infringes my right under Article 21," Mr. Mehta added.

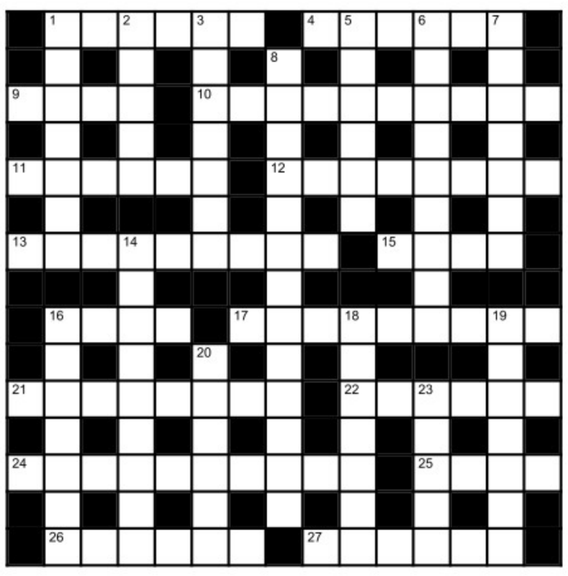
The government will continue its arguments on Thursday.

TH CROSSWORD + 14236

(set by Bruno)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Snoring in the middle of stripped down popular English crossword, perhaps? (6)
4 Computer from American city functions essentially when dropped in soda (6)
9 Harvest of farmer ultimately stolen by policeman (4)
10 Queen in USA too surprised with last president's references (10)
11 Make another effort to communicate with Harry, finally getting involved in Peter's problem (6)
12 Lost time in part of book on escort (8)
13 Dead Queen on last parade with King, perhaps? (6,3)
15 Change - remove last letter and last word (4)
16 No flattery repulsed King (4)
17 Classless society and music with no beats? Married man's into it! (9)
21 Electronic system's temporary - company needs to replace one (8)
22 It might keep one warm - a frog perhaps? (6)
24 Avoided collisions close to girls (4,6)
25 Black finger's tip chopped off (4)
26 Toe's wounded at one end - work extremely likely to be held back (6)
27 Some boys terrorise animal (6)

Down

1 One recently became rich - built unapproved pod outside (7)
2 Lively and fast - gets last batsman out for zero (5)
3 One in Barcelona that visits Louvre often for a drink (7)
5 One form of a tax - a revenue, mainly (6)
6 Family of bears in Montana migrating (9)
7 Water transport leaving river quickly - reaching edges of ocean (7)
8 Iconoclast fits norm? Mainly conservative? No, no! Eccentric! (13)
14 Refer to mob uprising around Iran's and Russia's capitals at different points to get facial recognition measurement? (9)
16 Oil producer's products leach ecstasy on river when going upstream (7)
18 King may suppress joke (7)
19 Orator's point gets limitless press coverage, when brought up (7)
20 Keenness of upper classes to live in London, for example (6)
23 Wet duck seen in fog (5)

SUDOKU

				8				
2	4					7		9
6		1			9			5
5	9			1		6		
		6		4			3	7
9			2			1		3
1		5					9	4
				3				

No.SS6230 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to previous puzzle

	S		R		C		A		F		W		S	
J	O	V	I	A	L		T	E	A	C	H	I	N	G
	L		C		A		H		S		I		O	
H	I	G	H	P	R	I	E	S	T		T	U	R	K
	T				E		I		E		E		E	
M	U	D	B	A	T	H	S		N	O	B	O	D	Y
	D		A				T		E		O			
M	E	A	N	D	E	R		O	R	G	A	N	I	C
			G		L		N				R		N	
A	P	O	L	L	O		E	X	P	E	D	I	T	E
	E		A		Q		E		E				E	
B	A	R	D		U	N	D	E	R	S	C	O	R	E
	N		E		E		L		U		Z		N	
N	U	I	S	A	N	C	E		S	C	A	R	E	D
	T		H		T		S		E		R		T	

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

8	1	4	2	3	6	7	5	9
7	5	2	8	1	9	3	4	6
6	9	3	5	7	4	1	2	8
9	7	8	3	5	1	2	6	4
1	3	6	4	8	2	9	7	5
2	4	5	9	6	7	8	3	1
4	6	1	7	9	3	5	8	2
3	8	9	6	2	5	4	1	7
5	2	7	1	4	8	6	9	3

FAITH

The greatness of Guru

Only four people matter in this world: Mata, Pita, Guru, Deivam (God). Man's ultimate goal is to reach God, but it is not possible to realise that without the guidance of a Guru. Vaishnavites consider Lord Narayana as their first Guru, followed by Mahalakshmi, Visvaksena and then Nammazhwar. Guru Purnima is dedicated to offering our salutations and gratitude to all the spiritual masters of the past and present.

In the Hindu tradition, the Guru is revered at the highest position. It is the Guru-Sishya parampara that has preserved the Hindu civilsation as a living tradition to this day, said Swami Mitranandaji. Adi Sankara described the Guru as someone who knows the truth, can articulate the scriptures and is always concerned about the well-being of the student.

Sage Viswamitra was a powerful ascetic who had brought all three worlds to a standstill with his penance. The sage donned the role of a guru to Rama and taught Him everything there was to learn. Gurus hail from varying backgrounds. Vyasa, the son of a fisherwoman, compiled the Vedas, wrote the Mahabharata and the Puranas. Without him, Hinduism would not possess the extensive spiritual literature it does today. His birthday is celebrated as Guru Purnima, in honour of all Gurus.

VIEWPOINT

SUMANT SINHA
Founder, Chairman & CEO of ReNew

Financing India's 'green' future

Centre's commitment in the Budget reflects a smart approach to integrate climate finance into energy transition

Through the Union Budget 2024, the Government of India has demonstrated increased political and public finance commitment towards climate change. It was encouraging to see energy security as one of the nine Budget priorities, along with the 60% increase in allocation towards the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy from ₹12,850 crore in the interim Budget to ₹19,100 crore. It is well recognised that most of the climate action will be private sector funded. The targeted measures announced in the Budget that span across the entire clean energy value chain will spur investor confidence and create substantial opportunities for the movement of both domestic and international finance to India, moving us to a low-carbon economy. Notably, four major initiatives stood out.

First, the continuation of the *Pradhan Mantri Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana*. It is a visionary initiative that will empower millions of households in residential solar adoption. The overwhelming response of 1.28 crore registrations underscores the immense potential of solar energy in India. This surge in demand will facilitate further investments into the solar sector, fostering innovation, and job creation.

Second, the imposition of duties on goods like solar glass and removal of duties on equipment for manufacturing of solar cells and panels will help to boost domestic manufacturing across the full supply chain for solar energy. Many Indian companies, including ReNew, have now ventured into solar manufacturing sector to fulfil the government's 'Make in India' vision and to make India the future manufacturing hub for solar energy components. The policy measures announced will reduce production costs for manufacturing in India, make it more competitive globally and thereby attract private capital. Third, the announcement by the Finance Minister on Critical Mineral Mission. This will be a key component in ensuring energy security. As we pivot towards renewable technologies, the exemption of basic Customs duty on 25 essential minerals used in renewable energy technologies such as copper, silicon, and vanadium, will secure our domestic supply chain and make it globally competitive. We need significant capital and technological expertise to develop a processing and refining industry for critical minerals and the duty exemptions will go a long way towards that.

The targeted measures announced in the Budget that span across the entire clean energy value chain will spur investor confidence

Finally, the development of climate finance taxonomy is a crucial step in channelling investments towards climate-friendly projects. Raising capital for climate adaptation and mitigation signals the serious commitment of this government in achieving its renewable energy targets. It also aligns with the G20's recommendation in their Sustainable Finance Report about the expansion of domestic capital flows for adaptation and mitigation projects.

By establishing clear definitions and standards for climate finance, this initiative will provide transparency and assurance to investors, facilitating the flow of funds into sustainable projects and supporting India's climate commitments. Moreover, it will also accelerate the emerging green bonds market in India, which has faced challenges in lowering its cost of issuance.

'Reviews of I-T Act, Customs may be ready by next Budget'

Officials are, however, uncertain if a final policy stance will be firmed up before February 1, 2025, especially given that the Finance Minister has proposed a 6-month window for the crucial reviews

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

The reviews of India's Income Tax Act and the Customs duty rate structure, announced in this Budget, could likely be completed in time for the 2025-26 Budget, while the GST Council is expected to restart parleys on rationalising the multiple rates next month, a top government official indicated.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has proposed a comprehensive review of the Customs duty rate structure for ease of trade and to slash disputes, along with a review of the 1961 Income Tax law to make it concise and easy to understand. Both these, she had said, would be completed in six months.

Tax overhaul: Comprehensive reviews of the Customs duty rate structure and the 1961 Income Tax are on the anvil. THE HINDU

Asked if the reviews, and a policy decision based on it, may find mention in the next Budget, the official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said: "it is also possible that it may take a little longer than planned, and we can't be certain if a final policy decision is reached on both these taxes before the Budget," adding the exercise would be concluded by the end of this financial year.

Ms. Sitharaman had also said in her speech that the Centre would strive to further simplify and rationalise the GST structure and "endeavour to expand it to remaining sectors".

Flash PMI signals uptick in services, factory output

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Combined output for manufacturing and services sectors grew in July, led by an uptick in manufacturing sector activity, on new orders and increased business activity, as per HSBC Flash Purchasing Manager's Index (PMI) from S&P Global Market Intelligence.

The reading came in at 61.4 in July against 60.9 in June. PMI value above 50 indicates an expansion in business activity.

"The rise in output in July was led by a further increase in business activity in the manufacturing sector, while the pace of expansion in services output also accelerated and remained well above its long-run average," said Pranjul Bhandari, Chief India Economist, HSBC.

Hiring in July improved due to capacity pressures in firms, with manufacturers performing better than the service providers.

Firms saw a rise in input costs in July due to improved demand.

"The rate of input-cost inflation continued to trend higher in both sectors, which has driven firms to keep raising sales prices," said Ms. Bhandari.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	WEDNESDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	80,149	-0.35
US Dollar	83.71	-0.02
Gold	71,650	-0.89
Brent oil	81.97	–

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	2970.70	-24.65
Adani Ports	1484.80	-22.55
Apollo Hosp	6422.60	19.00
Asian Paints	2912.80	15.70
Axis Bank	1239.25	-24.00
Bajaj Auto	9260.20	-122.30
Bajaj Finserv	1579.25	-39.60
Bajaj Finance	6607.15	-119.95
Bharti Airtel	1455.20	-10.50
BPCL	314.95	8.95
Britannia Ind	5829.50	-115.25
Cipla	1503.50	5.60
Coal India	493.80	6.80
Divis Lab	4551.60	24.60
Dr Reddys Lab	6820.15	-44.85
Eicher Motors	4915.35	-4.20
Grasim Ind	2806.90	-16.15
HCL Tech	1583.70	-14.65
HDFC Bank	1604.05	-14.35
HDFC Life	672.80	28.85
Hero MotoCorp	5417.75	-95.80
Hindalco	651.60	-1.90
Hind Unilever	2717.05	-49.30
ICICI Bank	1223.00	-3.75
IndusInd Bank	1396.65	-16.55
Infosys	1833.95	-2.95
ITC	494.05	1.85
JSW Steel	881.35	-12.60
Kotak Bank	1746.20	-22.70
L&T	3519.45	-18.60
LTIMindtree Ltd.	5665.15	-23.45
M&M	2805.50	-15.85
Maruti Suzuki	12487.25	-141.80
NestleIndia	2541.40	-40.15
NTPC	392.60	10.15
ONGC	319.55	5.40
PowerGrid Corp	337.15	2.90
Reliance Ind	2991.40	15.60
SBI Life	1632.95	38.10
State Bank	852.00	-11.90
Shriram Finance Ltd.	2724.25	-14.95
Sun Pharma	1619.45	17.85
TataConsumerProduct	1231.25	-25.65
Tata Motors	1027.70	25.90
Tata Steel	160.31	0.29
TCS	4306.25	3.90
Tech Mahindra	1533.30	39.90
Titan	3478.40	11.55
UltraTech Cement	11453.40	-92.40
Wipro	500.10	-0.45

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on July 24

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	83.52	83.84
Euro	90.58	90.93
British Pound	107.81	108.23
Japanese Yen (100)	54.04	54.25
Chinese Yuan	11.48	11.52
Swiss Franc	94.16	94.53
Singapore Dollar	62.11	62.36
Canadian Dollar	60.56	60.80
Malaysian Ringitt	17.87	17.95
Australian Dollar	55.09	55.31

Source:Indian Bank

Federal Bank Q1 net profit grows 18.3% to ₹1,010 crore

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Federal Bank Ltd. reported Q1 FY25 net profit rose 18.3% year-on-year (YoY) to ₹1,009.53 crore. Total business rose 19.9% YoY to ₹4,86,871.33 crore, the lender said in a filing.

Net advances rose to ₹2,20,806.41 crore, from ₹1,83,487.41 crore in the year-earlier period. Net Interest Income rose by 19.5% to ₹2,291.98 crore.

Deposits rose to ₹2,66,064.69 crore, from ₹2,22,495.50 crore YoY.

RBI tightens cash pay-in, payout norms

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday tightened cash-payout norms, making it mandatory for the remitting bank to keep a record of the name and address of the beneficiary.

The decision was taken after a review of Domestic Money Transfer framework, making it tougher for customers to transfer money via the banking channel from November 1.

For cash pay-in service, remitting banks/business correspondents (BCs) will need to register the remitter's details based on a verified cell phone number and a self-certified 'Officially Valid Document (OVD).'

"Every transaction by a remitter will be validated by an Additional Factor of Authentication)," the RBI said. Remitting banks and BCs must conform to the Income Tax Act, 1961.

Axis Bank Q1 net profit rises 4% to ₹6,035 cr.

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Axis Bank reported first-quarter net profit rose 4% year on year (YoY) to ₹6,035 crore compared with ₹5,797 crore in the year-earlier period.

Core operating profit for the quarter grew 16% YoY to ₹9,637 crore. Operating profit rose 15% YoY to ₹10,106 crore.

Net interest income (NII) for the quarter ended June 30 rose 12% YoY to ₹13,448 crore. Net interest margin (NIM) for Q1 of FY25 stood at 4.05%, Axis Bank said in a filing.

L&T Q1 PAT rises 12% to ₹2,786 crore

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Larsen & Toubro Ltd. reported first-quarter consolidated net profit grew 12% year-on-year (YoY) to ₹2,786 crore on higher revenue.

The engineering and construction major posted a 15% YoY increase in consolidated revenue to ₹ 55,120 crore on the back of robust execution at its Projects & Manufacturing (P&M) portfolio and a large order book.

International revenues at ₹26,248 crore constituted 48% of the total revenue.

Further, L&T said it had received orders worth ₹70,936 crore at the group level during the quarter, registering a YoY growth of 8% aided by strong momentum in West Asia.

During the quarter, orders were received across multiple segments like the offshore vertical of the hydrocarbon business, renewables, transmission & distribution, roads, nuclear power, hydel & tunnel, ferrous metals, health, and the precision engineering sectors.

International orders

International orders at ₹32,598 crore comprised 46% of the total order inflow.

The consolidated order book of the group as on June 30, 2024, was at ₹4,90,881 crore, a growth of 3% over March 2024 and 19% YoY. with the share of international orders at 38%, L&T said in a filing.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice No.: Y/E.29/2024-25/32
Dated: 15.07.2024
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders through IREPS portal only for the following work:

Item of work	Approx. Value
Extension of Road-4 Line for Shunting Neck by 750 Mtrs. at Sasalu (SLU) Yard.	Rs. 68,84,287.81/-

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 06.08.2024**
For details log on : www.ireps.gov.in
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/Traction/ Mysuru
PUB/281/AAMO/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-Auction Catalogue No.: UBL-PLS-JULY-24
Dated 15.07.2024
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites from bidders for E-Auction for the following works:

Name of the Work with its location	Date & Time of E-Auction: 30.07.2024 at 11:00 Hrs.
Leasing of SLRs/VPs in various Passenger trains over Hubballi Division for a period of two (2) years.	

For details log on : www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Commercial Manager/ Hubballi
PUB/289/AAMO/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

PUBLIC NOTICE
Our client **Smt. Gajalakshmi,** aged about 31 years, Wife of Sri. Mahesha S C, R/at. No.10, G Floor, A Block, Sai Sunny Height, 2nd Cross, 5th Main, Tatanagar, Banaglore-560 092, has negotiated to purchase Schedule property from its owner **Mr. Mohammed Iqbal, aged about 72 years, s/o. Late. Mohammed Ibrahim and . Mr. Mohammed Ekthedam, aged about 37 years, s/o. Mr. Mohammed Iqbal,** residing at No.737/B, 7th Cross, Nethajinagar, Chokkasandra, T Dasarahalli, Bangalore-560 057. The said owners have represented to our client that they are the absolute owners and that they have not created any other mortgage on the Schedule property.
People at large and all the concerned, private individuals, government/ semi-government institutions / bodies / authorities, if has got any right, title, interest, or share in Schedule property or anybody who has objection for the aforesaid transaction are herewith publicly informed to raise their objection/s in writing along with supportive documents to the undersigned within **FIFTEEN [15] DAYS** from publication of this Public Notice. If the same are not received in writing along with supportive documents by the undersigned within **FIFTEEN [15] DAYS** from publication of this public Notice, then it will be construed that the title to the said property is clear and that all such concerned have waived their rights and all such concerned shall be estopped from raising any objections thereafter and that we shall proceed thereafter further in the execution of the Sale Deed/s or such agreements and all such persons shall be estopped from raising any objections to such transaction thereinafter.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of the immovable property being Southern portion Old No.F5, New No. 34, Assessment No.8/1, formed in Survey No.8/1 of Nagashettyhalli village, Basaveshwara Layout, situated at **Nagashettyhalli village, Kasaba Hobli,** coming within BBMP Ward jurisdiction -19, Bangalore North Taluk, measuring East to West 50 feet; North to South 15 feet; in all admeasuring a total extent of **750 square feet::**
East By : 20 Feet Road; West By : H Group Site No.5 old No.35; North By : Remaining northern Portion of property bearing old No.F5 new No.34; South By : G Group Site No.4 old No.35;
SAAN Law Associates
S.M. ANEES AHAMED
Advocates
No.4 (10/2), G. Floor, West Park Road, Kumara Park East, Bangalore-560 002,
saanlawassociates@gmail.com
M : 98450 08707 / 9341718958
Place: Bangalore Date: 24/07/2024

IN THE COURT OF CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS JUDGE, MAYO HALL AT BANGALORE (CCH 29)
O.S. No. 26632/2022
BETWEEN:
The South Indian Bank Ltd.,
A Banking Company having its Registered Office at SIB House, T. B. Road, Thrissur-680001, Kerala, and a Branch Office at No. 4-41/3, Hennur Main Road, Geddalahalli, Bangalore-560077.
Represented by its Manager
Mr.Naveen John, Email Id: **bro486@sib.co.in** IFSC Code: SIBL0000486, Phone-080-28465884
Pan: AABCT0022F
.....Plaintiff
and
Mr. Jefferson Eleazer Dharmaraj,
....Defendant
Summons / Notice through Paper Publication Application U/o V Rule 20(1)(A) R/W 151 CPC
Mr. Jefferson Eleazer Dharmaraj,
Aged about 38 years,
Residing at No.2B, Daffodils, Trinity Fortune Layout, Geddalahalli, Kothanur Post, Bangalore-560 077.
PAN: AODPD7632Q
Mob: 8088818890
WHEREAS the above-named Plaintiff has instituted a case against you for recovery loan amount **Rs. 13,48,318.00 (Rupees Thirteen Lakhs Forty Eight Thousand Three Hundred Eighteen Only)** together with interest at the rate 9.45% p.a., from date of due till the date of realization.
You are hereby summoned to appear before O.S. No. 26632/2022 in Hon'ble City Civil and Session Judge, Mayo Hall, (CCH-29), At Bangalore, Court in person or by an advocate/pleader on **09/08/2024 at 11.00 A.M** to answer the question of the notice, failing which the matter will be heard and determined as "EX-PARTE"
Giving under my hand and seal of the Court, on this **19.07.2024**
By Order of the Court
Sd/- Deputy. Registrar,
City Civil Court, Mayohall Bengaluru.
Advocate for Plaintiff
FX & CO., Advocates,
New No.99, Old No.11/1,Gover Road, Cox Town, Bengaluru- 560005

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice No.: HE-TRD-2024-25-OT-18
Dated. 22-07-2024
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following works:

Item of work	Approx. Value
Comprehensive Annual Maintenance of SCADA system for SYNERGY make remote terminal units of Ballari-Hosapete as per RDSO Specification No. I/SPC/RCC/SCADA /0133 for a period of 4 Years.	Rs. 57,71,600/-

Last date for submission of bids : **Upto 15:00 Hrs. on 21-08-2024**
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Keep visiting the website for any corrigendum till closing date
Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer / TRD Hubballi
PUB/297/AAF/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-Auction for Contract of Manning, Maintenance and Management of Parking Facilities Integrated with Access Control at Sir M Visvesvaraya Terminal, Bengaluru (SMVB.)
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites bidders for E-Auctions on the following Dates:
02-08-2024 : Contract for Manning, Maintenance and Management of Parking Facilities Integrated with Access Control at Sir M Visvesvaraya Terminal, Bengaluru (SMVB.) Railway Station, Bengaluru Division, South Western Railway.
PRE-BID MEETING for above contracts : 26th July, 2024 (15:30 hrs.)
Location : - Divisional Railway Manager Office Ground Floor, Chamber of Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, South Western Railway Bengaluru - 560 023
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Commercial Manager Bengaluru
PUB/299/AAF/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA
Public Works Department.
Executive Engineer, Publice Works Divison, Amalner-425401
Phone No. 02587-224112/email-amalner.ee@mahapwd.gov.in
E-TENDER NOTICE NO. 11 FOR-2024-2025
Online Tenders (e-tender) in "B-1" form for 02 (Two) Roads Works are invited by the Executive Engineer, P.W. Division, Amalner for and behalf of Government of Maharashtra, Electonic Tender Management System. http://mahatenders.gov.in from Reputed and experienced firms / Contractors who fulfil the terms and condition of tender and having experience of similar type of work. The rights are reserve to reject all or any tender by Superitending Engineer/ Executive Engineer. Conditional tenders are not acceptable.
The details can be viewed and downloaded online from dated 25/07/2024 to 02/08/2024 at 17.00 Hrs. directly from the Government of Maharashtra e-tendering Protal http://mahatenders.gov.in This detailed tender notice is available on portal http://mahatenders.gov.in also on www.mahapwd.com and on Notice Board of the Office of Executive Engineer, Public Works Division, Amalner
Sd/-
Executive Engineer, Public Works Division, Amalner
DGIPR/2024/2025/1186

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
Construction & Maintenance Division
LPSC Campus, 80 Ft. Road, HAL II Stage, Bengaluru -560 008. Ph:080-25037136/080-25037214
24.07.2024
E-TENDER NOTICE
On behalf of the President of India, item rate tenders are invited for the following work:

Name of work	Removing of debris, rubbish, cotton murrum, dry leaves, building materials, stone slabs & rotten tree trunks at LPSC(B) campus, Bengaluru.	Providing Fire rated Doors for SRDD Laboratories at LPSC(B) Campus, Bengaluru
Tender Notice No.	CMG/LPSC(B)/02/2004/C/MI/2024-25 Dated: 24.07.2024	CMG/LPSC(B)/02/2006/C/MI/2024-25 Dated: 24.07.2024
Estimated Amount	₹7.83 Lakhs	₹5.17 Lakhs
Period of completion	12 Month	1 Month
Sale Period	From 24.07.2024 to 30.07.2024	From 24.07.2024 to 30.07.2024
Earnest Money Deposit [EMD]	₹15,660/-	₹10,340/-

Interested tenderers may please refer **www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO.** Also detailed Notice Invting Tender (NIT) for eligibility criteria and other details, which can be downloaded from **www.isro.gov.in, www.lpsc.gov.in**
Sd/- Head CMD, LPSC(B)

Debadatta Chand

'Govt. will adhere to FRBM path'

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The major takeaway from the Budget is that the government will be adhering to the fiscal responsibility and budget management (FRBM) path, which will ensure that the fiscal deficit reaches 4.5% next year and moves further downwards towards the 3% mark subsequently, said Debadatta Chand, MD & CEO, Bank of Baroda.

Budget cuts TDS on life-cover payouts, policy commission

N. Ravi Kumar
HYDERABAD

The Union Budget proposed to slash the rate at which tax will be deducted at source (TDS) on life cover policy pay-outs, to policyholders, and insurance commission payable, to agents, from 5% to 2%.

The proposal to cut TDS on life insurance insurance policy, including on the sum by way of bonus, by amending Section 194DA of the Income Tax Act would come into force from October 1, Budget documents showed.

Likewise, the Budget has proposed amendment to Section 194D, pertaining to TDS on payment of insurance commission.

The amendment would take effect from April 2025.

The Budget also proposed an amendment providing any expenditure not admissible under the provisions of Section 37 of I-T Act in computing profit and gains to be included to profit and gain of life insurance business. This amendment would take effect from April 1, 2025. The proposal comes amid instances where non-business expenses have been claimed by life insurers.

Mallika Srinivasan

Farm outlay to spur tractor sales: TAFE

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Union Budget's allocation of ₹1.5 lakh crore to the agriculture sector will provide a fillip particularly for entry level tractors and two wheelers which are vital to Indian small farmers, TAFE CMD Mallika Srinivasan said in comments on the Budget.

RAMALLAH

Two men, including a customs officer, killed by IDF in West Bank

REUTERS

Palestinian officials said the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) killed two men, including a customs officer, in separate raids in the West Bank on Wednesday, the latest violence to rock the occupied Palestinian territory. The raids were carried out before dawn in Qalandiya and the town of Tubas, residents and officials said. AFP

TOKYO

Russia bans entry of top Japanese executives including Toyota chief

AFP

Russia has banned the head of Toyota and 12 other senior Japanese business figures from entering the country, prompting a protest by Tokyo on Wednesday. The list includes Toyota chairman Akio Toyoda, Rakuten chief Hiroshi Mikitani and Akihiko Tanaka, president of the Japan International Cooperation Agency. AFP

NOUAKCHOTT

25 migrants killed, dozens missing as boat capsizes off Mauritania

AFP

At least 25 migrants died and dozens are missing after their boat capsized off Mauritania, the country's news agency AMI said. The Mauritanian Coast Guard "saved the lives of 103 illegal immigrants and recovered 25 bodies, following the sinking of their boat off the coast of the capital Nouakchott", AMI reported. AFP

BERLIN

Germany bans 'Islamist' group over alleged Hezbollah, Iran links

AFP

Germany on Wednesday banned the Hamburg Islamic Centre, an association that has been under investigation over its alleged support for Lebanon's Hezbollah group and its links to Iran. Tehran summoned the German Ambassador to Iran to condemn a "hostile action". Germany in turn held talks with Iran's Ambassador. AFP

Protests in Washington ahead of Netanyahu's speech to U.S. Congress

Around 200 held on charges stemming from a sit-in at the Cannon House Office Building; demonstrators want U.S. govt. to cease all arms shipments to Israel; Biden, presidential candidates Harris and Trump are scheduled to meet the Israeli PM

Associated Press
WASHINGTON

The arrival of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has touched off a flurry of protests in the nation's capital, including a sit-in at a congressional office building that ended with multiple arrests.

Some of the demonstrations have condemned Israel, but others have expressed support while pressing Mr. Netanyahu to strike a cease-fire deal in the war with Hamas and bring home the hostages.

The Capitol Police said about 200 people were arrested on Tuesday on charges stemming from the sit-in at the Cannon House Office Building. Jewish Voice for Peace said many more than that were arrested, rabbis among them.

Trail of protest: Ultra-Orthodox Jews demonstrate in support of Palestinians at the Capitol Hill on Wednesday. REUTERS

Workers on Wednesday erected a black metal fence around the White House as Washington braced for more protests ahead of Mr. Netanyahu's speech before a joint session of Congress. The police have significantly boosted security around the Capitol and closed multiple roads for most of the week.

Dozens of protesters rallied outside Mr. Netanyahu's hotel on Monday evening after his arrival in Washington, and on Tuesday afternoon, hundreds of demonstrators staged a flashmob-style protest in the Cannon building, which houses offices of House members.

'Never again'

"I am the daughter of Holocaust survivors, and I know what a Holocaust looks like," said Jane Hirschmann, a native of Saugerties, New York. "When we say 'Never Again,' we mean never for anybody."

The demonstrators turned much of their ire on the Biden administration, demanding that the President immediately cease all arms shipments to Israel.

"We're not focusing on Netanyahu. He's just a symptom," Hirschmann said. "But how can (Biden) be calling for a cease-fire when he's sending them bombs and planes?"

Mr. Biden and Mr. Netanyahu are expected to meet on Thursday. Vice President Kamala Harris will also meet Mr. Netanyahu separately that day.

Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump said he would meet with Mr. Netanyahu on Friday.

Kyiv seeks 'common ground' with China on ending Russia war

Associated Press
BEIJING

Ukraine's Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba has said he is seeking "common ground" in talks this week with his Chinese counterpart on ending his country's war with Russia.

Mr. Kuleba met on Wednesday with Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Guangzhou, a major commercial and manufacturing centre in southern China. It is the first visit to the country by a Ukrainian Foreign Minister since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which has strained Ukraine's relations with China.

"I am convinced that a just peace in Ukraine is in China's strategic interests, and China's role as a global force for peace is important," Mr. Kuleba said in opening remarks.

Dmytro Kuleba

China's importance

China did not participate in a peace conference in Switzerland last month that did not include Russia.

Mr. Kuleba's visit reflects a calculation that any peace deal favorable to Ukraine would likely be a non-starter without China on board.

Two persons wounded in Moscow car bombing

Agence France-Presse
MOSCOW

Two persons were wounded in a Moscow car bombing on Wednesday, with investigators probing the incident amid conflicting reports over whether a Russian military official and his wife were involved.

Officials said an unidentified explosive device tore apart a car in a residential courtyard in the north of the capital.

"Two people were wounded. The victims were taken to a medical facility by ambulance," Interior Ministry spokeswoman Irina Volk added in a post on Telegram, without providing further details.

Citing unnamed sources in law enforcement, the state-run TASS news agency and several other outlets initially reported that a Russian military official named Andrei Torgashov – identified as a "serviceman and participant in the special military operation" in Ukraine – and his wife were hit.

But hours later that version was brought into question when several state outlets and Telegram channels reported they had spoken to Mr. Torgashov and his wife, who were unaffected.

"It's a complete fake. This explosion has nothing to do with me," *RIA Novosti* cited Mr. Torgashov. He said the car was not his and that he lived in a different part of the capital.

Several Russian military and pro-Kremlin public figures have been targeted in car bombings since Moscow launched its offensive on Ukraine in February 2022.

Bangladesh crawls back to normalcy after deadly unrest

Press Trust of India
DHAKA

Bangladesh crawled back to normalcy on Wednesday after a five-day nationwide violent student protest over quotas in government jobs with rush hour traffic returning to streets in the capital, and limited reopening of banks, garment factories and Internet services.

A nationwide Internet blackout since last Thursday has restricted the flow of information in the country. Limited connectivity was restored on Tuesday night.

Mobile phones have started working, but users say the Internet is slow, while mobile Internet and sites such as Facebook remain suspended.

The curfew was relaxed for seven hours in the capital.

However, schools and other educational institutions remained shut.

The violence claimed dozens of lives, including that of students, with some media tally suggesting the toll to be as high as 184.

Typhoon Geami triggers heavy rainfall in Philippines

Agence France-Presse
MANILA

Relentless rain drenched the northern Philippines on Wednesday, triggering floods in Manila and deadly landslips as Typhoon Gaemi intensified the seasonal monsoon.

Rescuers were deployed across the densely populated capital to help evacuate people from low-lying homes after downpours turned streets into rivers, trapping vehicles.

"The disturbance it caused is great. The waters reached the second floor of our house," Nora Clet, a resident, said.

A state of calamity was declared for Manila, unlocking funds for relief efforts.

Helping hand: Residents in Quezon city in Manila being rescued on Wednesday after Typhoon Gaemi hit Philippines. GETTY IMAGES

Government offices were shut and classes suspended, more than 100 domestic and international flights were cancelled, and tens of thousands of customers lost power because of the weather.

Some shopping malls and churches offered temporary shelter to people affected.

Typhoon Gaemi, which has swept past the Philippines as it heads towards Taiwan, intensified the southwest monsoon rains typical for this time of year.

'Not unusual'

"Usually the peak of rainy season is July and August and it so happens that there is a typhoon in the eastern waters of the Philippines that enhances the southwest monsoon," senior weather specialist Glaiza Escullar said.

More than 200 mm of rain fell in the capital in the 24 hours to Wednesday morning, Ms. Escullar said, which was "not unusual".

More heavy rain was expected on Thursday.

Landslips killed a pregnant woman and three children in Batangas province, south of Manila, and a woman and her five-year-old child in Pampanga province, north of the capital.

That takes the death toll from heavy rains over swaths of the country in the past two weeks to at least 14, as tens of thousands sheltered in evacuation centres.

President Ferdinand Marcos ordered disaster response officials to ensure they had sufficient stockpiles of food for the hardest-hit areas because "their situation is critical".

Sport

Fiji men's rugby 7s team, the pride of i-Taukei, will look to make it a historic hat-trick of Olympic golds

Jonathan Selvaraj
PARIS

The Fiji men's rugby 7s team goes into the Paris Games as defending champion. It also won gold, Fiji's first-ever at the Olympics, in Rio 2016, when Rugby 7s was first introduced in the Olympic roster.

Nearly 40% of the population of Fiji are of Indian origin.

Dream team: The Fiji men secured the nation's maiden Olympic gold when rugby 7s was introduced in 2016. GETTY IMAGES

"The almost ethnic national imagery of Fiji is the muscular indigenous Fijian, in a traditional dress. You rarely see the Indian-Fijian in popular Fiji culture. This is true particularly in sport with a couple of exceptions - probably Vijay Singh in golf and (ISL player) Roy Krishna in football," says Dr. Jack Sugden, lecturer at Liverpool John Moores University and the author of 'Untangling complexity: The ethnic, gender and class dimensions in Fijian sport and society'.

"The indigenous tribal population was mostly left to themselves while Indians were brought over to work as indentured labourers on sugarcane plantations. The land itself was owned either by the state or by the native Fijians. Indeed, the native Fijians prefer to be identified as i-Taukei - which literally means owners of the land.

"When Fiji won its independence in 1970, the British left a power vacuum that people assumed would be filled by indigenous Fijians. But the economic power was in the hands of the Indian Fijians because when the sugarcane plantation owners left, they left the keys in the hands of the Indian workers. That set the scene for success in business for one group, whereas indigenous Fijians were kind of left there, almost directionless in terms of economics," says Sugden.

In that cultural uncertainty, where other avenues for progress seemed closed for them, rugby, introduced by the British in the early 1900s eventually became a source of i-Taukei identity and pride.

Only two players, that too of part-Indian ancestry - Jack Prasad and Ben Volavola - have ever represented Fiji at the international level.

Baron Pierre de Coubertin and his indelible link to Paris

Y.B. Sarangi
PARIS

Before his heart was placed in Olympia and his body laid to rest in Lausanne, Pierre de Coubertin's soul belonged to Paris.

'The father of modern Olympics', who signed off satisfactorily after witnessing the Games being staged in his home city in 1924, would have loved to see the return of the quadrennial show-piece, now a truly global event, to the French capital with several novelties after a hundred years.

Paris has to be the undisputed second home of the Olympics as Coubertin held the first Congress at the Sorbonne University here to convey his idea of reviving the Games in 1894. Initially, Paris was considered as the host city for the inaugural Games before Athens got the honour to hold it. Paris hosted a forgettable edition in 1900 before Coubertin made sure that the city organised it properly in 1924.

Even though the contribution of Coubertin is not played up now, it's only befitting that Paris has some distinguished sites in his memory. Named after the illustrious sports administrator, Stade Pierre de Coubertin, an indoor multi-sport arena built in 1937, is now the home of PSG handball team. It will be used as the goalball competition venue in the 2024 Paris Paralympics.

Besides, there is a playground named Avenue Pierre de Coubertin and the Pierre de Coubertin French Committee in the honour of the great man, who was an educationist and historian as well.

Normandy too bears some memories of Coubertin in the form of his childhood home, which finds a place in the Olympic Museum in Lausanne. Besides being an opportunity to show the neo-modern face of France to the world, the hosting of the 2024 Paris Olympics is a marker of Coubertin's genius to provide a so variedly-divided world a unique platform to be at one place even though once in four years.

SPARKS FLY

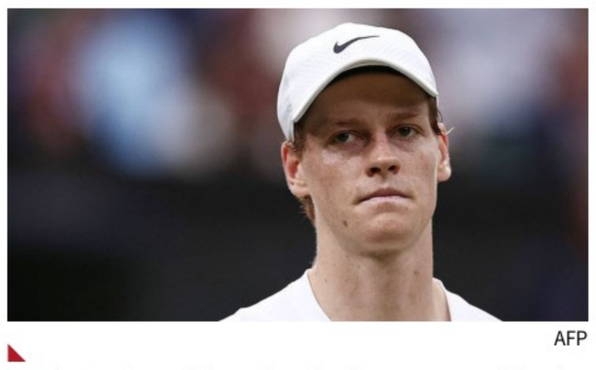
Morocco beats Argentina in contest marred by controversy

AFP

Morocco beat Argentina 2-1 in their opening game of the men's Olympic football, but only after a late equaliser for the South American side was disallowed and the final minutes were played out in an empty stadium following crowd trouble. Spain edged Uzbekistan 2-1 in another contest.

THROAT TROUBLE

Jannik Sinner pulls out of the Paris Games due to tonsillitis



AFP

Jannik Sinner has withdrawn from the Olympics. "I am saddened to inform you that I will not be able to participate... after a good week of clay training I started to feel unwell. I spent couple of days resting and during a visit the doctor found tonsillitis and strongly advised me against playing," wrote the Italian on X.

ILL TREATMENT

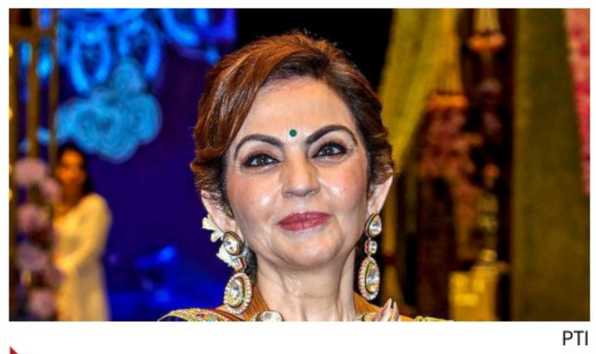
Video shows suspended Dujardin whipping horse's legs

AP

The video footage that led to Britain's joint-most decorated female Olympian Charlotte Dujardin pulling out of the Paris Games shows her whipping a horse's legs multiple times. The three-time Olympic champion, who was provisionally suspended on Tuesday, said it was an 'error of judgement' and did not reflect how she trained.

TENURE CONTINUES

Nita Ambani unanimously re-elected as IOC Member



PTI

Nita Ambani was re-elected as the IOC member from India, winning unanimously with 100% vote, at the ongoing 142nd IOC session in Paris. "This re-election is not just a personal milestone but also a recognition of India's growing influence in the global sporting arena. I share this moment of joy and pride with every Indian," said Nita.

India's athletics aspirations rest on the golden arm of Neeraj

The reigning Olympic champion insists he is on course for another big performance despite a dip in form; steeplechaser Sable needs to be tactically smarter to finish in the medal bracket; the men's 4x400 relay team's will be watched closely

PARIS 2024

Uthra Ganesan

History beckons: Neeraj will look to emulate his Tokyo heroics and become the first Indian individual to win back-to-back gold medals in the Summer Games. FILE PHOTO: K.R. DEEPAK

When Neeraj Chopra threw to 87.58m on a wet and windy August 7 evening in 2021 in conditions less than ideal to sporting excellence, there were few to applaud the significance of a maiden track and field gold, nay medal, for independent India in the history of Olympics.

Since then, however, the man with the golden arm has not only become one of the most recognised and loved Indian athlete across the world but also the most written about.

Keeping pace

To be fair, his achievements have kept pace with his rising popularity, making Neeraj the most obvious medal prospect at Paris.

Despite some struggle with achieving and maintaining optimum fitness ahead of the big event and few competitive outings, Neeraj has insisted he is on track for another big one.

Pushing hard

There are not guarantees though, with Tokyo silver medallist Czechia's Jakub Vadlejch pushing hard in both performance and consistency.

There are others, including the German duo of Julian Weber and teen sensation Max Dehning, Finn Oliver Helander, Anderson Peters, compatriot Kishore Jena and of course, Arshad Nadeem.

But Neeraj has been known to bring out his best at big-ticket events and it doesn't get bigger than the Olympics.

On the field, there are a few others who can genuinely surprise, with Abdulla Aboobacker being the lone possibility in triple jump. And while hoping for an Indian medal might be far-fetched in most other track and field disciplines, there are genuine contenders expected to at least make the finals of their respective events, none so more than Avinash Sable in the 3000m steeplechase.

Despite impressing otherwise all through, Sable has fallen short in big competitions, often due to lack of experience or smartness in switching tactics or diffidence on the track.

This time around, India's best steeplechaser ever has admittedly worked more on his strategies and mindset and unless he has a terrible day, should make the finals.

Parul, Jyothi in focus

On the women's side, the consistently improving Parul Chaudhary can be expected to do the same.

And if she has a good day, Jyothi Yarraji might just surprise everyone in the 100m hurdles.

There is also the men's 4x400m relay team. The quartet of Anas, Ajmal, Amoj Jacob and Rajesh Ramesh made the world sit up and take notice during the World Championships last year, pushing powerhouse USA all the way in the heat and finishing fifth in the final, running under three minutes both times.

Although they haven't been able to replicate the same, the recent outing Poland saw the Indians run quick, with Rajesh Ramesh clocking a season's best returning from injury that augurs well for a team that can make the finals.

India has a tough passage to traverse in its group

HOCKEY

Uthra Ganesan

Big ask: The Indian team's first priority would be to make the quarterfinals and that is easier said than done. X@THEHOCKEYINDIA

Three years back, in front of an empty stadium in a world so wrecked by Covid that sports seemed almost an afterthought, the Indian men's hockey team finally overthrew the giant albatross of glorious Olympic history of eight gold medals (with two bronze and a silver) and scripted its own success story with a bronze medal.

Even though 11 of the 16 players from the side that took the podium in Tokyo head to Paris hoping to get a second medal, this time of a different colour, the current Indian side is very different.

There is a new coach in Craig Fulton, who has had just over a year to adjust, adjudge and prepare for the biggest challenge.

He has brought in a new playing style, one that embraces defensive control against the earlier offensive chaos, a style that on paper might be less exciting but more effective but not exactly in the Indians' arc of comfort.

That India managed to adapt to his structure with two titles, including the crucial Asian Games, is a positive sign.

Then again, there are few challenges for India within the continent now, the main opposition lying in Europe and Australia, also in Group B with India, making it a tricky first round.

Getting through to the quarterfinals should be India's first target and that is easier said than done.

Strong opponents

Along with defending champion Belgium, doughty New Zealand – which stunned India in shootouts in the group stage during the 2023 World Cup, at home, leading to Graham Reid's resignation – tricky former champion Argentina, and a dangerously rising Ireland, the Indian men have their task cut out to finish among the top four in the group, after which will be the knockout challenges.

Pool A has Netherlands, Spain, Germany, France, Britain and South Africa – and while there can be guesses on the top-four, none of them will be an easy opposition for India. Then again, there can be no easy games at the Olympics.

Some of the key members from Tokyo are no longer there. The experienced Rupinderpal Singh has since retired, leaving captain Harmanpreet Singh to largely shoulder the burden of scoring on his own. Simranjeet Singh and Dilpreet Singh have fallen out of favour and Surender Kumar is no longer the defender he used to be.

There are new faces upfront in Abhishek and Sukhjeet, both extremely intelligent and talented. There is Jarmanpreet Singh at the back with Sanjay and Rajkumar Pal as playmakers in the middle. And then there is P.R. Sreejesh, having declared his retirement after Paris and hoping to go out on a high one last time.

But the combination of youth and experience is a tricky one and Fulton would be hoping he has got the balance right.

The path to glory will not be straightforward, but the shuttlers will have to persevere

BADMINTON

Ashwin Achal

Golden opportunity: Sindhu will aim to become the first Indian to win three Olympic medals in an individual sport. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

If P.V. Sindhu climbs onto the podium at Paris, she will create history as the first Indian to win three Olympic medals in an individual sport.

The path to glory, however, is not straightforward. Sindhu has not been in good form this year, with a silver medal at the Malaysia Masters counting as the lone bright spot. The 29-year-old will also have to overcome a tough draw at Paris, which includes potential clashes with World No. 8 He Bingjao and reigning Olympic champion Chen Yu Fei in the last-16 and quarterfinal respectively.

H.S. Prannoy and Lakshya Sen need to play at their very best to make a mark in the men's singles. World No. 13 Prannoy's last noteworthy performance came in January, when he won a bronze in the Yonex Sunrise India Open. Early exits have plagued the 32-year-old since.

While Prannoy should have no trouble advancing from the group stage, Lakshya faces an early minefield. The 22-year-old, semifinalist at the All England Championships and French Open, must surpass World No. 3 Jonatan Christie in Group 'L'. Christie has the wood over Lakshya, having won their last four meetings.

Sindhu and Lakshya will benefit greatly from having Indian legend Prakash Padukone by their side. Padukone will travel to Paris as the squad mentor.

Genuine shot at a medal

The rise of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty as a formidable men's doubles pair adds strength to India's badminton squad. The French Open and Thailand Open champions, Satwiksairaj and Chirag present a genuine chance of claiming a Paris medal. The pair has broken new ground, having won bronze at the 2022 World Championships and gold at the 2022 Asian Games, apart from powering India to a Thomas Cup title.

Satwiksairaj-Chirag, coached by Danish doubles stalwart Mathias Boe, must first focus on a tricky Group 'C' match against World No. 6 Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Rian Ardianto.

To even make it to the Olympics women's doubles main draw is an achievement for Ashwini Ponnappa and Tanisha Crasto. The duo, who only started playing together in January last year, put up excellent shows to force their way into contention. Ashwini, 34, makes her return to the mega event after her last appearance in the 2016 Rio Games.

Ashwini-Tanisha is up against it in Group 'C', drawn alongside World No. 4 Nami Matsuyama and Chiharu Shida (Japan), and Tokyo Olympics bronze medallist Kim So Yeong and Kong Hee Yong (South Korea).

Indian challenge in other sports

Y.B. Sarangi

Lifting hopes: Mirabai will look to provide the thrust to India's Paris campaign with a medal. FILE PHOTO: SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

The Indian representation will be limited to just one or a few athletes in several disciplines in the Paris Olympics.

Weightlifting: Mirabai Chanu, who bagged a silver in the Tokyo Olympics, will compete in her third consecutive Games. The Indian, who has been troubled by injuries in recent years, has recovered well after her hip injury in the Asian Games last year and will be eager to bag a medal in the 49kg category.

Mirabai, who totalled 184kg in the IWF World Cup in April after a five-month injury layoff, needs to lift more than 200kg in Paris to ensure a medal. China's defending champion Hou Zhihui is the overwhelming favourite to win the gold.

Tennis: Doubles star Rohan Bopanna will be the centre of attraction at Roland Garros. Bopanna, who won the Australian Open with Matthew Ebden earlier this year, has chosen Sriram Balaji to partner him as the latter has the experience of playing on clay courts.

Singles player Sumit Nagal achieved his career-best world ranking of 71 to qualify for his second Olympics.

Golf: Aditi Ashok, competing in her third Games, will be keen to improve on her fourth place finish in the Tokyo Games. Diksha Dagar, a Deaflympics gold medallist and a two-time Ladies European Tour winner, will also bank on her Tokyo experience.

Multiple professional title winners Shubhankar Sharma and Gaganjeet Bhullar should not find it difficult to adapt.

Sailing: Vishnu Saravanan and Nethra Kumanan, who will take part in men's and women's dinghy, will appear in their second Olympics.

Swimming: Srihari Natraj and 14-year-old girl Dhinidhi Desinghu have been selected to represent India under universality quotas. Srihari (men's 100m backstroke) will appear in his second Olympics, while Dhinidhi (women's 200m freestyle) will make her debut.

Equestrian: Anush Agarwalla, a member of the Asian Games gold medal-winning team and an individual bronze medallist, in dressage will be the lone rider from the country.

Rowing: Balraj Panwar will be competing in men's single sculls.

Judo: Commonwealth Games silver medallist Tulika Maan, taking part in women's +78kg, is the solitary Indian judoka at the Games.

Archers begin campaign, bank on WC showing

Y.B. Sarangi
PARIS

The Indian men and women archers will trust their hard training while trying to overcome last-minute distractions due to the absence of Korean coach Baek Woong Ki and psychologist Gayatri Madkekar as they begin their campaign with a hope to win India's first archery medal at the Games.

While the women's competition will be staged in the morning, the men's competition will take place in the afternoon in the grand backdrop of Invalides.

The men's team of B. Dhiraj, Tarundeep Rai and Pravin Jadhav will take confidence from its World Cup Stage-1 gold medal win in Shanghai where it upstaged the elite Koreans.

The women's side, comprising the seasoned Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhakat and Bhajan Kaur, performed well in the World Cup Stage-3 in Antalya and will look to continue in the same vein.

INBRIEF

Gauff joins LeBron as USA's flag-bearer at Paris OC

Tennis star Coco Gauff will be the woman flag-bearer for the USA at the Opening Ceremony (OC) of the Paris Games. The reigning US Open champion will join NBA superstar LeBron James as the US flag-bearer for Friday's ceremony along the Seine River. "I never thought in a million years I would have the honour of carrying the American flag for Team USA," Gauff said.

Five Aussie women's water polo players test COVID-19 positive

Five players of Australia's women's water polo team for the Paris Olympics have tested positive for COVID-19. Anna Meares, the chef-de-mission for the Australian team in Paris, said the cases have been confined to the water polo team. She said the affected players have been cleared to practice when they feel well enough to train.

French fencer Thibus confirmed for Olympics

Ysaora Thibus, one of the favourites for gold in the foil event, was confirmed in the French fencing team for the Olympics, but she could later be stripped of any medal as an appeal from the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) is hanging over the 32-year-old. Thibus was suspended by the International Fencing Federation (FIE) in February after testing positive for the banned substance Ostarine before being cleared of any wrongdoing by the governing body in May.

'Have to take advantage of the absence of star Indian players'

Sri Lanka should take maximum advantage of the absence of the star Indian players who have recently retired from T20Is and compete strongly in the upcoming three-match series, Sri Lanka's interim coach Sanath Jayasuriya said on Wednesday. "Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli are best players in the world. Their absence will be loss to the Indian team and we have to take maximum advantage out of that."

Injured Chameera ruled out of series against India

Sri Lanka pacer Dushmantha Chameera has been ruled out of the upcoming home series against India after suffering an injury, *ESPNcricinfo* said. Speaking at a press conference, Sri Lanka's chief selector Upul Tharanga confirmed Chameera will miss both the T20I and ODI series against India.

Indian men finish 6th, women 7th in World junior squash

India finished sixth and seventh in the men's and women's sections respectively in the World junior squash championships in Houston, USA.

The Results:

Men: India lost to England 1-2 (Shaurya Bawa bt Yusuf Sheikh 3-11, 11-6, 11-8, 11-7; Yuvraj Wadhwani lost to Bailey Malik 11-5, 9-11, 8-11, 14-16; Ayaan Vazilalli lost to Dylan Roberts 11-6, 9-11, 9-11, 7-11).

Women: India beat New Zealand 2-1 (Shameena Riaz lost to Ella Lash 7-11, 12-10, 13-11, 4-11, 4-11; Nirupama Dubey bt Anabel Gemmell 9-11, 11-6, 11-4, 8-11, 11-9; Unnati Tripathi bt Ella Hill 11-4, 11-3, 11-6).

LIVE TELECAST

Paris 2024: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD), Sports 18-3 & JioCinema, 1 p.m.

India's paddlers keen to prove a point

With big challenges ahead of the contingent spearheaded by flag-bearer Sharath Kamal, it would be intriguing to see as to how the stars underline the country's progress in the sport

Amol Karhadkar

Achanta Sharath Kamal, featuring in his fifth and the last Olympics, will be the Indian contingent's flag-bearer at the opening ceremony. Thanks to its maiden qualification for the team championship in the men's and women's sections, a record eight paddlers will represent India at the quadrennial extravaganza.

Last hurrah: Sharath would be keen to bow out on a high in Paris. RITU RAJ KONWAR

No complacency

It appears to be a perfect recipe for the C-word to set in, in the contingent. But complacency is not even on the minds of any of the India's paddlers, who checked in to the Olympic village after a rigorous training camp in Germany.

In fact, they are hungry to underline that they belong on the biggest stage and are desperate to go one notch higher. In Tokyo, Manika Batra became the first Indian female to win two matches at the Olympics while Sharath stretched the eventual gold medallist – the legendary Ma Long – before going down in the round of 32.

This time around, Manika – seeded 18th – has been training hard and eyeing a place at least in the pre-–quarterfinals, if not the quarterfinals. Ditto is the case with Sreeja Akula (16th seed), who has overtaken Manika as the highest-ranked Indian female in the world just before her maiden appearance.

As for the men, Olympics debutant Harmeet Desai is desperate to score an upset or two. The road for Harmeet – seeded 49th – is definitely going to be much tougher than veteran Sharath, seeded 25th. Having had an extensive four-month preparation the 42-year-old veteran will be eager to end his Olympics sojourn on a high.

> Once you make it to the quarterfinal, it can be anybody's game
> – **SHARATH KAMAL**

Does that mean India's paddlers are nowhere close to being on the podium. It looks like the case, at least in singles. But it's the team championship where India is hoping to create ripples by going past the pre-quarterfinals.

In a knockout draw of 16, the men and women are seeded 14th and 11th, respectively. Both teams will be keeping their fingers crossed to not being pitted against champion China first up.

The teams are eager to go past the first hurdle – a tough task in itself. Then on, as Sharath told *The Hindu* recently: "once you make it to the quarterfinals, it can be anybody's game."

Can Indian table tennis' progress be underlined with an impressive outing – albeit not a podium finish – in table tennis? If it does, it will definitely be a historic fortnight for the paddlers in blue!

Sharath eager to soak in special moments

Y.B. Sarangi
PARIS

A. Sharath Kamal is extremely proud of being the joint flag-bearer for India in the Paris Olympics. He is even more delighted that some of his childhood friends are coming down to witness the special moment.

Apart from the excitement of his family members, Sharath spoke about the joy of having his friends. "Some of my old table tennis friends are also coming to Paris to cheer me on. They are school friends. They were playing table tennis and now they are coming to watch the Olympics. One is coming from the US, one from Dubai and two from Chennai," Sharath told *The Hindu* on Wednesday.

The 42-year-old is flooded with good wishes from his international friends as well. "They also have a lot of pride because they know me as a person. The longevity has helped me make a lot of friends. All of them are very happy that I am able to do this. I've got a lot of messages and wishes. I played with them in the German league in 2010. They have all quit, now they are saying, 'We all stopped, you are still going on. Keep it up, keep doing well. They are also proud that I am a flag bearer."

Sharath said he was privileged to share the role of the flag-bearer with double Olympic medallist shuttler P.V. Sindhu. "How proud is that moment! Two-time Olympic medallist, silver and bronze medals, she keeps calling me 'brother, anna.' It's almost like we talk in the same language, almost like family. For me it's a fantastic moment."

> The mental part is very tough. In so many years to have that mindset is something which changes over time."

Looking back at other proud moments in the Olympics, Sharath said, "In 2008 I had a fantastic performance. I played in the round of 32 there. After 12 years, experiencewise in Tokyo, which I got because I played a fantastic match and it was Covid situation.

"The world came out with a positive note in Japan. I would say sport was able to help the world speak about some performances, speak about something else. The world was going through a tough time, but I think the mood changed after the Olympics."

Asked whether it's taxing to compete with younger athletes, Sahrath said, "The physical taxation doesn't hurt me. The mental part is very tough. In so many years to have that mindset, to go in and be aggressive, is something which changes over time."

Having fun: Olympic volunteers take time out for a photo session with the Olympic rings in Paris. AP

The City of Light is all set to host the Summer Games

Y.B. Sarangi
PARIS

The walk from the St. Denis metro station to the stadium didn't feel long because of the fans' enthusiasm
Reed Scott is an avid pin collector who has covered most of the Winter and Summer Games and continues to pursue his passion

After landing in the 'City of Light', the bright smiles of the volunteers, dressed in green uniforms, made one forget the long and tiring journey that one had made from the 'City of Joy'. Their gesture was apt – to make the visitor comfortable and help him overcome the initial hiccups one experiences after arriving in a new country.

The design, colours and motif of the Games, subtly embellishing the Charles de Gaulle airport, Stade de France and the aquatics centre across it on the way to the heart of the city underscored that Paris is ready for the Games to open.

Excited people

The French people are excited about the Olympics. Whether fans dressed up in Gallic Rooster costumes on the footpath, or flocking the Stade de France to witness the home team take on USA in a men's rugby sevens match on the first day of the competitions of the 33rd Olympic Games.

The walk from the St. Denis metro station to the stadium didn't feel long because of the fans' enthusiasm. "Follow the crowd," an ecstatic gentleman guided us without understanding the place we were looking for. Numerous friendly people along the way were always eager to extend assistance to a foreigner despite the language barrier, making one feel at home amid the Games atmosphere.

Ultimate pilgrimage

For pin collectors, the Olympics is the ultimate pilgrimage. Several of them from different countries were seen roaming around the Games Village looking for fellow collectors. Proudly wearing the tiny jewel-like pieces all over their shirts, vests and caps, they celebrated the spirit of the Games in a different way.

Reed Scott from Atlanta is one such avid pin collector, who began his hobby when his home city hosted the Games in 1996. He has covered most of the Winter and Summer Games and continues to pursue his passion. He says this gives him an opportunity to meet and connect with people from across the world. And it goes well with the true spirit of the Games.

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Laksh and Selvi triumph

Laksh Sadhwani and Selvi Shah won the boys' and girls' titles respectively at the Karnataka State U-21 tenpin bowling tournament held here.

In the boys' final, based on cumulative pinfall of two games, Laksh Sadhwani (367) defeated Vansh R. Parekh (308) and Tushar Bhatia (248) to emerge winner.

In the girls' category, Selvi Samkit Shah (266) overcame Arushi Ranka (220) and Vaidhika Vengala (220) to clinch the title.

Karthik, Adhoksh shine in Swastic Union CC (2)'s victory

C.A. Karthik (84) and Adhoksh (5/29) starred for Swastic Union CC (2) as it beat Engrades CC by 20 runs in the KSCA T20 tournament for G. Kasturirangan Memorial Trophy.

The scores: Malleswaram Gymkhana 121/7 in 20 overs (Shreyank Sagar 27) lost to Rajajinagar Cricketers 124/5 in 16.3 overs (Nihal Ullal 25, N. Rohan 31 n.o.).

Young Lions Club 43/5 in five overs (Dheeraj Kumar Yadav 26) lost to City Gymkhana 48/3 in 4.2 overs [Match reduced to five overs per side because of wet outfield].

Vultures 87/1 in eight overs (D. Nischal 40, Kruthik Krishna 28 n.o.) bt South End SC 43/5 in eight overs (Shikhar Shetty 3/4) [Match reduced to eight overs per side because of wet outfield].

Dooravani Cricketers (1) 96/5 in 12 overs (Mohit Sharma 42) bt Jupiter CA 58 in 10.4 overs (M. Keerthi 3/17) [Match reduced to 12 overs per side because of wet outfield].

Jawans 48 for no loss in five overs bt Jolly Cricketers 38/4 in overs (T. Amruthraj 25) [Match reduced to five overs per side because of wet outfield].

Jawahar SC (2) 45/3 in five overs bt Visweswarampuram (2) 35/7 in five overs Shimon Luiz 4/16) [Match reduced to five overs per side because of wet outfield].

Social Cricketers 130/9 in 13 overs (S. Aadarsh Prajwal 37, Sudhanwa U. Kulkarni 37, Sanjay Kumar Yadav 3/29) bt Vijaya, Malur 70/7 in 13 overs (Ritesh Bhatkal 3/12) [Match reduced to 13 overs per side because of wet outfield].

Swastic Union (2) 195/6 in 20 overs (C.A. Karthik 84, Yashwant 39, Md. Taha 33) bt Engrades 175 in 19.5 overs (Abu 74, S. Ramanji 28, Adhoksh 5/29).

Chintamani SA 49 in 14.2 overs (S. Punith 4/9) lost to Sir Syed Cricketers 51 for no loss in 4.3 overs (P. Dhruv 27 n.o.).

Cavaliers 72 in 19 overs (Melu Kranthi Kumar 4/12) lost to Bangalore Occasionals 77 for no loss in seven overs (Niranjan 55 n.o.).

Visweswarampuram (1) 111 in 14.4 overs (Stalin Hoover 40, Preetesh 3/15, Anirudha A. Joshi 3/21) lost to Palar SC, Kolar 116/3 in 12.3 overs (C.R. Aiyappa 42, Preetesh 31 n.o.).

RV Engineering College Gymkhana 114/4 in 16 overs (Adarsh Rangappa 44, U.V. Vishruth Dev 29 n.o.) lost to Swastic Union CC (1) 115/1 in 12 overs (E.J. Jasper 47 n.o., Thippa Reddy 39) [Match reduced to 12 overs per side because of wet outfield].

The Bangalore Cricketers 134/9 in 20 overs (Nagaraj 38, J. Manoj Kumar 32, Jude Nathenil 3/30, A. Anush 3/16) bt Select Cricketers 86 in 17.3 overs (Albin Mathew Philip 37, D. Bharath 3/10).

Herons 129/7 in 20 overs (Sai Susheel Reddy 30, Aman Mallya 3/17) lost to Modern 132/6 in 17.1 overs (S.A. Sachin 54 n.o.).

Minerva 138/7 in 20 overs (Jairam Srinivas 49, Mohammad Rayan 3/17) bt BEL Colony RC 107 in 18.5 overs (S. Vinay Radha 28, K.N. Anish 3/20).

Jaidur Cricketers 150/9 in 20 overs (B.V. Aryan 37, K. Vinay Kumar 33, Madhav P. Bajaj 4/18) bt Century Cricketers 136 in 19.1 overs (Hari Rajiv 45, Likith S. Gowda 28, M.B. Naveen 3/23).

Vijaya 157/5 in 17 overs (Yash Jadhav 54, Abdul Majid 37 n.o., Vijaykumar Patil 4/25) bt Hammonds 111/4 in 17 overs (Kavisha Umesh Mukkannavar 42, Vijaykumar Patil 32 n.o.) [On VJD method after match reduced to 17 overs per side because of wet outfield].

Young champs: Laksh and Selvi with their reward. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Yashas to take on Darsh for the top prize

Yashas Raj beat Arjun Soori 6-1, 3-6, 6-2 in the boys singles semifinal to set up a title-clash with Darsh Khardekar, who outplayed Dhanush Billapura 6-0, 6-0, in the ANT-AITA U-16 Championship Series tennis tournament here on Wednesday.

In the girls final, Aditi Khanapuri will meet Thanu Vishwas. While Aditi rallied to beat Suhani Bhasin 0-6, 6-1, 6-0; Thanu beat Reet Jhawar 6-4, 7-5.

Narrow win for SWR, Hubli

SWR, Hubli edged out Postal 4-3 in the Hockey Karnataka League Championship here on Wednesday.

The results: Canara Bank 3 (B.M. Likhith 34, C.A. Nikkin Thimmaiah 44, Sathwik 53) bt SAI STC 1 (Kabilan 10); SWR, Hubli 4 (Vinith 7, C.S. Shamanth 23, K.R. Bharath 43, Pavan Madiwalar 50) bt Postal 3 (Sri Rama 44, 59, H.T. Ramesh 52).

Mysore District A beats Beagles

Mysore District A defeated Beagles BC 66-42 in a boys match at the State sub-junior basketball championship on Wednesday. In a girls category game, MNK Rao Park BC overcame Halasuru BC 40-34.

Manav Venki to lead

Manav Venki will lead Karnataka in the junior boys' National football championship for BC Roy Trophy in Chhattisgarh from July 27 to August 12. Karnataka, placed in Group-C, will play its first game against Punjab on July 28 before meeting Chandigarh on July 30 and Meghalaya on August 1.

The team: Manav Venki (capt.), Arjun K. Shashikanth, Pavan G. Nair, Darsh Pattanaik, V. Yoga Vijayam, Yohann Karayath George, Gautam Vipindas, Ridit Maheshwari, Akul Deepak, Rithish Roshan Haribabu, K. Deekshith, Shaan Abraham Lobo, S. Roshan, S. Niranjan, H.K. Adhi, Mika Reddy, Mohamed Daanish, Karna B. Kelur, C.M. Sarvesh, Vedant Roy, Ananda Asir, Mohammad Niyab; **Head coach:** N.S. Manju; **Asst. coach:** N.B. Raghu.